# ZARDOZ

Original Screenplay

by

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1 EXT. HILLSIDE DAY

A bleak, barren range of hills. Some fifty drably-dressed men kneel before a manifestation of ZARDOZ. He takes the form of the old-testament Jehovah, an ancient, bearded man with a huge, deep voice. He is just a ghostly outline, but three times life-size and he stands above them on the hill-top. His voice is awesome. It reverberates across the valley.

ZARDOZ

Zardoz speaks,
You are the chosen. Go forth and kill.

The men hide their heads in the ground and tremble at the mighty voice. One man raises his face to ZARDOZ and forces himself to watch. We shall come to know him as 2030, the hero of this tale.

ZARDOZ

You who have been raised up from Brutality, you will kill the Brutals who multiply and are legion. Your task is heavy, so do His bidding. ZARDOZ, your God, gives you the GUN.

ZARDOZ raises a gun in his hand and fires it towards the sky. The report, like his voice, is amplified many times. 2030 watches with fascination.

ZARDOZ

The gun is good. The penis is evil. The penis shoots seeds and makes new life to poison the Earth with a plague of men, as it once was. But the gun shoots death and keeps the Earth free of the filth of Brutals. Go forth and kill. Zardoz has spoken.

ZARDOZ fires the gun again and then disappears. In his place is a heap of guns and ammunition. The men gradually get to their feet, regaining their confidence as they realize the Manifestation has departed. They move tentatively at first towards the guns. 2030 picks one up, then there is a stampede, everyone grabbing at them. The men run about wildly with the guns, firing into the air, crying out with religious exaltation, falling on their knees in prayer, calling out their gratitude, kissing the guns. They run off in all directions until the hillside is empty and bleak once more.

1 Continued

Just as the hillside becomes deserted, 2030 steps into view again, quite close, his eyes sparkling with fervour. He examines his glistening gun.

He comes closer still. He spins the chamber and its bright surface throws off splinters of light. 2030 turns his joyful face directly towards the CAMERA, then raising the gun, fires it at us.

The screen goes black and the MAIN TITLES (3 or 4 only) appear, each one corresponding with a gunshot.

2 INT. AIRSHIP DAY

Nothing to suggest an airship yet.
A large, windowless vaulted interior. The walls are smooth. It could be some kind of futuristic church. Or more likely a mausoleum, because it is stacked high with neat lines of 'coffins'.

It is perfectly quiet and motionless. At the head of each 'coffin' is an identity plaque. There are names followed by a sequence of numbers and letters, and sometimes no name at all, but only the letters and numbers.

In the lid of each 'coffin' is a small glass window through which can be seen a 'dead' face. As the MAIN TITLES continue, CAMERA moves from face to face with a rhythmic motion, moving, pausing, moving, pausing. Face after face presents itself, men and women, some old but mostly young, and all lifeless.

As TITLES END, CAMERA PAUSES on the weather-beaten face of '2030'. TITLE MUSIC ends abruptly, emphatically coinciding with 2030 opening his eyes.

He frowns as though trying to recall something, then a faint smile touches his mouth and is gone again.

He becomes aware of his entombment. He tries to move and cannot. He presses his face up to the glass panel in an attempt to increase his field of vision of the outside. He squirms and struggles and manages to manoeuvre his hands up to the glass. He presses upwards, straining hard, but having little leverage.

His heavy breathing begins to cloud the glass. A look of terrifying violence on his face as he beats on the lid. His fist smashes at the glass panel, until it cracks, then splinters and finally bursts away.

2 Continued

The gap is large enough for his head and one arm. His hand is bleeding. He reaches out, gropes along the lid and releases three catches that secure it.

He climbs out, very shaky. His knees buckle as he stands upright. He hangs on to the wall and shakes his head to clear it. Looking around he sees the smooth rounded walls, the rows of coffins. He peers in at the windows of some of the coffins.

Becoming circumspect he steps behind the cover of a stack of coffins, out of the centre aisle. He looks carefully about him. There is no sign of life.

At one end of the interior strong light floods up from the floor. He goes carefully towards it, glancing about, still seeing no one.

There is a clear glass panel in the floor, letting in daylight. 2030, on all fours, looks down through it to the world below. The ship is about 3,000 feet above the ground. It is crossing the dead ruins of a city. There are no people, no cars, no smoke. The only movement being the skyscrapers and the church spires twisting and distorting in the thick curved glass.

2030 stiffens as he catches a glimpse of a band of men below. They run for the cover of some rocks as the shadow of the ship passes over them. 2030 cannot make out their dress, except that it is dull-coloured and rude. What is most remarkable about them is the way they run as a pack, like animals, very smoothly, in formation, bent forward. They are quickly hidden by the rocks and there is no further sign of life.

2030 gets to his feet to further explore what is obviously an aircraft of some kind. There is a small door in the side. He tries the locking handle and it gives. He is satisfied and tightens it again. He edges carefully towards the front of the ship where there is a flat, doorless wall with a small window.

He looks through the window into the control-cabin. It is a large room circled with windows. There are seats and banks of controls. But it is empty. The rudder-levers move with small adjustments, lights flash, dials and meters function. There is no crew. The ship is evidently flying automatically.

2030 strains to read the compass and other dials. The altimeter needle is spinning rapidly as the ship gains height, rising over a mountain range. 2030 starts to breathe more rapidly. The indicator

2 Continued

shows 7,000 metres and still rises. He turns back into the hold, finding breathing more and more difficult.

He looks inside the coffin he broke out of, his breathing getting faster. There he quickly discovers a small bank of dials marked Atmospheric Pressure, Temperature, Oxygen, Anaesthetic. His fingers search out vents and discover a flow of gases.

He looks around with growing desperation. Breathing is painful. He moves along the rows of coffins, glancing at their identity plates. He might be looking for a particular name, but that is by no means certain. Decisively he chooses a coffin and opens the lid. He drags out the unconscious body of a man. Most notable about the body are a number of velvet pouches attached to its belt.

2030 pulls the body towards the small door in the side of the ship. He spins open the locking handle and bundles the body through it. 2030 reveals great strength and speed in these actions but his distressed condition impedes him.

The body sticks in the door, one of the pouches opens and seeds spill out; thistle down, acron and soft pearl-like spheres. The air current from the open door swirls them about driving them into 2030's face. Suddenly the man regains consciousness. He looks confused and fearful. 2030 tries frantically to force the body out.

The man twists his head, catching 2030's eye with a look that might be recognition, and then he smiles a peaceful smile. A final push forces the body out and it falls down into an eiderdown of cloud far below, leaving a trail of seeds in its wake.

2030 blunders back to the newly-vacated coffin and climbs in, pulling the lid down over him. He finds the locking switch, pulls it, and the catches clamp the lid down air-tight.

His face behind the glass shows relief and he breathes easily once more. His eyes glaze over and he falls into unconsciousness with a glimmer of a smile on his face.

3 EXT. AIRFIELD (PROCESS) SUNSET

Derelict, deserted buildings and crumbling concrete runways. There is a tall, slender tower which has been maintained in good order. The airship descends towards this tower.

4 INT. AIRSHIP NIGHT

A robot lifting device glides down the rows of coffins until it reaches the one now occupied by 2030. It slides a lifting plate under the coffin and carries it to the glass panel in the floor, which has now opened.

5 EXT. AIRFIELD (PROCESS) NIGHT

The airship has coupled to the tower. The coffin is lowered down the tower on to a small hovercraft type vehicle similar to the robot device in the airship.

With the coffin loaded it starts off across the deserted airfield. It makes no noise. It is a tiny object in the vast, empty, flat space.

6 EXT. COTTAGE NIGHT

The robot device carries the coffin towards a country cottage set among trees. The cottage has a disturbing almost comic appearance. The structure is traditional, but a plastic domed greenhouse bulges from one side. On the roof is a windmill and the fan arms of solar cells. The robot docks in a bay built into a wall for the purpose. The coffin slides into the house through a trap door.

7 INT. COTTAGE DAY

2030 awakens once more in the coffin. But this time he quickly remembers his situation, presses the release switch and lifts the lid. Beside the coffin is a glass of clear liquid. He sniffs the drink, pours a drop on to his finger. It is syrupy. He sips it, then quickly swallows it down. It revives him.

He steps out into the living-room of a simple cottage. He is puzzled as to how the coffin got inside the cottage. The foot-end abuts the wall. He examines the wall and finds a low hinged section. He pushes it open. It lets on to a low shed, the outer wall having a loose-flap door, like a garage for some kind of vehicle. It is empty.

He looks about the room. The furniture is rough and obviously hand-made and so is almost everything in the room, including cups and plates, cutlery, rugs and even candles. It is very worn and comfortable.

SUPERIMPOSED on this is the paraphernalia of a biologist; two or three microscopes, hundreds of jars and seeds, each labelled, but no books or papers are visible. Like all living units in the Vortex it is self-supporting and biologically regenerative.

7 Continued

The room lets out into the domed conservatory. Plants grow in liquid beds, hydroponically. There are two solar cells with wires going into microscopes. Everything is dusty and unused.

2030 makes a search of the cottage. His manner is almost desperate. He looks at everything, under, through and over. In a drawer he finds the top hat, cloak and wands of a magician, together with other conjuring accoutrements. He seems puzzled and disappointed. He looks at the foot of the coffin. The name plate reads ARTHUR FRAYN followed by the string of numbers and symbols. He runs his hand over the name as though it were a magic symbol. He relaxes a little.

Suddenly 2030 spins around at the sound of a male voice behind him. The voice seems to come from behind some clutter on a table. He approaches it stealthily and finds the source to be a rectangular box, about 9 inches by 4 inches and 2 inches thick. It has a set of keys along its top like a miniature piano. They are worn from constant use but letters, numbers and symbols are decipherable on them. The voice is artificially inflected.

VOICE

Attention.
Harvest produce report.
Harvest produce report.
Submit surpluses and needs.

He investigates it carefully. Just as he goes to touch it, a lens in the top narrow side of the box lights up. It projects a picture on to the wall.

A bank of figures begins to appear, not unlike the electronic departure information at an airport.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vortex 4: (Commune 3) | SURPLUS: | 4c OATS 3c BARLEY 2c CARROTS |
| | NEED: | SOAP, FRUIT, LEATHER, SALT. |
| Vortex 9: (Commune 1) | SURPLUS: | 9c HAY 4c TURNIP 8c CABBAGE 18c RAW WOOL |
| | NEED: | WHEAT, BARLEY. |

Etc.

2030 watches this with fascination. No sooner do these figures show up than they begin to change. The 'surplus' figures decline and disappear, the 'needs' cancel out.

7 Continued

2030 puts his hand on the screen and tries to touch the projected figures. Part of the picture projects on to his hand. He notices this and although he is obviously unfamiliar with the device, he quickly understands its function. He moves his hand closer to the lens so that eventually the whole image is focused on his palm.

Finally he picks up the box (communicator) and turns it over to examine it. The projecting lens sends its images cartwheeling over the ceiling and walls. He experiments with this, pointing it in various directions and even on to his own face.

He notices that a white plastic card is attached to the side of the communicator. He pulls it off, then puts it back again. It adheres magnetically. He presses one of the keys. The projected image changes.

He jumps back with surprise as the page of a book appears on the wall. It is filled with algebraic formulae. He presses again.

A picture of a human face appears. Again he presses, getting the idea of the thing. It is a closer view of the face, just an eye filling the picture. It seems to stare at him. It is disconcerting.

He bangs the communicator with his fist. The 'eye' remains. He picks up the box and throws it at the wall. The communicator falls to the ground and projects the eye against the wall-skirting.

He stomps it with his foot, hits it with a stone jar, kicks it, does everything he can to destroy it. But the projected 'eye' remains, staring at him.

The communicator is indestructible. Finally he puts it under a cushion on an armchair. Soon a muffled voice comes from it.

COMPUTER VOICE
Here is a list of food surpluses remaining.
First by Vortexes, later figures for each
commune will be available ... etc ...

2030 continues his search, glancing back occasionally at the armchair with rueful, resentful look.

8 INT. KITCHEN DAY

2030 makes a quick search for food. There is an open fire with a grill over it, some rugged utensils on the shelves. The cupboard is bare. He ponders, then looks out the window.

Four hundred yards away is a large house, just glimpsed through the trees. It is Georgian in style, but has many additions and alterations and it sprawls over quite a large area.

9 EXT. THE VALLEY DAY

It is a perfect sunlit morning. The valley is wooded with mature oak, elm, chestnut and larch. Willows mark the twisting route of a fast running stream. Beyond on the hill-sides are meadows and above them soft mountains, purple with heather. 2030 walks through the trees, armed with a stout stick and a kitchen knife at his belt.

The birds sing, shafts of sunlight halo the leaves. 2030 is full of wonder as he takes in all this vegetation. He almost treads on some buttercups, but jumps back. He squats down and examines the flowers. He gingerly touches them. He picks one and examines it.

2030
What's it for?

He pulls it to pieces, then loses interest and goes on.

On a distant slope a group of young men are playing with a football. They 'head' it each to each, elegantly, effortlessly, endlessly. It is the game of soccer, infinitely refined, and finally ritualised.

He comes upon some crumbling outbuildings belonging to the large house. There is a paddock, overgrown with ferns and brambles.

Some peacocks and peahens peck and scratch amongst the weeds. They are in full feather, the great fan-tails dazzling in the sunlight.

10 EXT. STABLE YARD DAY

2030 stalks them. He gets close enough, then strikes with devastating speed, swinging the stick like a Samurai sword. The birds avoid him easily. He tries again, getting more wild and violent, diving at them, falling and tripping.

There is a marvellous confusion of colour as he darts amongst them. The 'eyes' in the tails seem to watch him mockingly.

10 Continued

He gets up, rubbing his bruises then sits down in the grass. Glancing up, he sees a girl of twenty standing at the edge of some trees, watching him. She is dazzlingly beautiful, a vision. Their eyes meet and hold for a moment.

He is red-faced, out of breath, angry; she serene and absolutely still. Her expression is very hard to decipher: not fear or surprise, but perhaps a hint of amusement, detached but not cold, remote yet very aware. 2030, on the other hand, is caught very much off-balance. He is hungry, frustrated, defeated. But the girl's look calms him. He is mesmerised. The hard, cruel lines in his face soften, suggesting hidden aspects of his personality.

Then the spell breaks and he scrambles to his feet, a piece of broken wall obscuring his view of her for a moment. The look of the hunted hunter returns. He sprints towards the girl, but she is gone. There is no sign of her. But on the grass where she stood is a loaf of bread. 2030 picks it up, sniffs it, touches it with his tongue then ravenously devours it.

11 EXT. GEORGIAN HOUSE DAY

2030 circles the house, moving cautiously amongst the cover of the bushes and outbuildings. He sees at one point the same little garage with flap doors, as was in the cottage. There is quite a lot of noise and activity. He occasionally glimpses a young man or woman moving to and from the house to the farm buildings. There are green-houses, gardens, paddocks, a blacksmith's forge, etc. 2030, keeping carefully hidden moves closer to the house.

12 EXT/INT. WORKROOM DAY

Glancing in a window he sees a young man and a girl working a loom. Beyond it in the same room, a girl is watching a 'communicator' screen, like the one in the cottage, tapping rapidly on the keys and receiving a mass of quickly changing visual data.

13 EXT. GROUNDS OF LARGE HOUSE DAY

2030 turns the corner of the house almost colliding with two men and a woman. They are standing in a triangle facing each other. They seem to be singing. Their voices are very expressive. There are no words but the melody is comprehensible and even sweet. They show no sign of awareness of 2030 and he backs stealthily away.

13 Continued

When he is some ten yards from them, he turns and runs towards the trees. He reaches the cover of an Elm when from behind it emerges the young girl who left the bread. She goes into the house through some French windows without seeing him. He follows and looks through the glass.

14 EXT/INT. LONG ROOM GEORGIAN HOUSE DAY

There are a number of people in this room, each of whom kiss the girl as she passes amongst them. She reaches a blank wall. They follow her closely with their eyes. She runs her hand over the wall with a trembling, vibrating motion. Where her hand has passed appears a strange drawing. It quickly fills out the wall.

It is a kind of surrealist landscape with complex and disparate activities. It is somewhere between comic strip and a Bosch painting. As it materialises the people in the room chant an eerie song. It swells up approaching a crescendo.

The picture has a luminous quality, almost coming to life. 2030 scans it intensely. It is the history of Vortex society, showing the collapse of our world, the survival of the communes and their developement. The voices reach an unearthly, unbearable pitch. Then he sees, in the picture, the figure of a man standing among peacocks. It is unmistakably himself.

Combining with the music it fills him with horror. He breaks away and runs for the cover of the trees again.

15 EXT. WOODS DAY

Coming out of some trees he comes upon a gravel drive and follows it up a little. It soon reveals a large building, one part of which is a sort of Gothic castle. Joined on to it are some modern buildings. There is an old sign, lying on its side. 2030 lifts it up and reads it. It says 'CASTLE HOTEL'.

16 EXT. CASTLE HOTEL DAY

2030 is drawn towards it by the sound of music, a tinny Kurt Weill kind of dance tune played on a saxophone and piano. He moves carefully up to the house and looks in the window.

17 INT. BALLROOM DAY

Thirty old people, all in their seventies and eighties, are dancing slowly to the music. They wear formal evening dress, but the clothes are so decrepit and decayed that they scarcely hold together. Indeed they have been patched and stitched, but the lining and paddings show through. The once white shirts are yellow and frayed. They move in a dream-like way, as three musicians - as old as they are - play. Their eyes are dead as they hold each other in claw-like hands. One old man turns and sees him at the window. He appears to recognise 2030 and points a crooked finger at him.

18 EXT. CASTLE HOTEL DAY

2030 darts away perplexed and starts back towards the cottage. Moving through the trees he notices the Robot threading its way uncannily between the trees. It is loaded with sacks of grain.

19 INT. COTTAGE DAY

2030 enters and finds a woman (MAY) in her early thirties facing him. She has a striking face, etched with character and, perhaps, suffering. She has a strong, full body. She is a mature woman of power and personality. She confronts him.

MAY
How did you get here? Where is Arthur Frayn?

2030
Hard to say ... I ... woke up and here I am,

They both glance at the coffin.

2030
Some kind of mistake.

MAY
Impossible.

2030
Sure. It's only human to -

MAY
Human?

19 Continued

She looks away, abstracted for a moment. 2030 is confused and awed by her presence, his violent force quite subdued.

Suddenly she turns on him and looks him in the eye. He is very discomfited as her gaze seems to burn into his brain. He glances away shiftily, but is always drawn back to her look.

MAY
You come from the Outlands?

2030
Yes.

Her eyes refuse to release him. She seems to be in a trance-like state,

MAY
(softly)
Blood! I see blood.

2030 is sweating and he squirms and shuffles his feet.

2030
Sure. I kill.

MAY
An Exterminator.

2030
Yes.

She looks away and stares blankly out of the window. It is very quiet. A shaft of sunlight makes a Jacob's ladder between them. With her face averted he is able to appraise her as a woman for the first time, the curve of her breast, the line of her hip. She, on the other hand, does not look at him as she starts to question him again, as though to spare him.

MAY
Do you know where you are?

2030
I guess this is a Vortex ...

MAY
You were told about the Vortex?

19 Continued

2030
Zardoz says ...

He hesitates, looking about nervously.

MAY
What does Zardoz say?

2030
Zardoz says if you obey him, you'll go to a Vortex when you die, and there you'll live forever ...

MAY
Happily?

2030
Yes.

MAY
So you think you're dead?

2030
Am I?

He has watched her hungrily all this time. She turns back and catches his look. She is surprised by it, profoundly unsettled. He sees this and recognises an advantage. He stares on with open sexuality.

There is a kind of peace. The shaft of sunlight catches her left breast, illuminating its shape and seeming to separate it from the rest of her body.

2030 looks at it, as though it were an aesthetic object, or a beautiful bird perched in a tree. All this is just a moment, then she recovers and fixes him with a look of such power that he convulses as though an electric current passed through him.

He starts towards her, reaching out to seize her, but he seems to lose his strength. He slumps against the wall, then slides down it, consciousness draining from his eyes.

20 EXT. DESOLATE PLAIN (MEMORY) DAY

2030 and three companions are galloping across it. They carry sharp-pointed lances and 2030 has a huge hand-gun. They are pursuing a band

20 Continued

of primitive-looking men, dressed in rough furs and remnants of conventional clothing. Their hair and beards are long and matted and they are dark-brown from unwashed dirt and constant exposure.

2030 (V.O.)
(somewhat slurred)
I love one that puts up a good fight. I love to see them running. I love the moment of their death when I am one with Zardoz.

The riders catch up with the Brutals and expertly lance them, wheeling and turning with brilliant horsemanship. The Brutals are quick too, dodging and weaving to avoid the lances, but totally silent and without complaint. 2030 is flushed with the pleasure of the hunt. He doubles back and, leaning low out of the saddle, shoots the wounded in the head.

MAY (V.O.)
Its co-ordination is exceptional.

A flash of MAY's face as the gun fires. Now 2030 is galloping his horse in pursuit of a young girl. Her sparse clothes reveal a lithe, muscular body. She has a wild, animal face and black tangled hair. She is very quick, dodging and feinting. 2030 has a net which he casts over her.

21 INT. BASEMENT DAY

Flash out of 2030's head: he is unconscious on a marble slab table, a crystal is fixed to the centre of his forehead.

22 EXT. DESOLATE PLAIN (MEMORY) DAY

The net tightens around the girl, little diamonds of flesh bulging through the mesh, her face wild and defiant in capture, eyes blazing.

23 INT. BASEMENT DAY

MAY watching a screen in a darkened room.

MAY
(pensively)
Such intensity. So alive.

MAY's face is beautiful, but set and lifeless compared to that of the girl.

24 EXT. DESOLATE PLAIN (MEMORY) DAY

The girl struggles in the net. 2030's face comes into the picture, the exhilarated face of a victor. He presses a rough kiss on the girl's mouth through the netting. It is such a sudden gesture that MAY recoils with a gasp. This is not lost on CONSUELLA.

The screen goes black.

WOMAN'S VOICE (CONSUELLA)
It's blacked again. How can it do that?
It seems deliberate.

MAY (V.O.)
(pensive)
I don't know.

25 EXT. WHEAT FIELD (MEMORY) DAY

Twenty Brutals stand in line hoeing the black earth. One man stands to one side with a skin drum. Each time he beats the drum, they strike the earth with their hoes. They work in perfect precision.

2030 rides through at the head of six fellow Exterminators. The Brutals prostrate themselves as they pass, all except one who continues to hoe in an automatic way. 2030 makes a small signal with his head and one of his lieutenants shoots the offender dead. The other Brutals resume their work without a glance at their fallen companion.

2030's face is dead of all expression.

CONSUELLA
This is a more recent memory. Cultivation has started.

The picture fades out.

MAY (V.O.)
It's blacked again.

26 INT. BASEMENT DAY

MAY removes the crystal from 2030. This produces a slight convulsion in him and he stirs into consciousness. MAY is very pale and thoughtful, CONSUELLA disturbed. 2030 perceives them in a hazy, half-conscious way.

26 Continued

MAY
Disturbed?

CONSUELLA
A little.

MAY
The Outlands have to be controlled.

CONSUELLA
I always voted against forced farming.

MAY
(sarcastic)
You prefer honest slaughter.

CONSUELLA
We have to shut ourselves off, - we have to -

MAY
This is the first visual contact with the Outlands in years - as opposed to data - if you discount Arthur's comic reports.

CONSUELLA
It's dangerous ground.

MAY
There's something hidden in these images . . .
Something important,

2030 becomes mistily aware of his surroundings - the two women, the big cellar, looking like an untidy medical laboratory, having none of the order and neatness associated with technology. There are a number of 'coffins' similar to the one 2030 travelled in. They have glass or plastic tops and unconscious bodies can be seen inside them. Some have mutilated limbs. Over the mutilated part is a kind of membrane filled with liquid.

CONSUELLA
(shrugs)
Well, we may as well destroy it right.
away.

She moves towards 2030 on the slab. He follows her with his eyes.

26 Continued

MAY
I don't agree. I think it should be studied.
Besides, we must find out how it got here.
No Brutal has ever penetrated a Vortex.

The two women now turn and look at one another. CONSUELLA strokes MAY's hair and kisses her.

CONSUELLA
(pleading)
May. Please.

MAY breaks away from CONSUELLA. She taps the keys of her communicator. A rapid succession of images, diagrams, statistics, formulae appear on the screen accompanied by a voice. MAY absorbs herself in these, ignoring CONSUELLA.

CONSUELLA
May, for my sake. For our love's sake.

MAY
Consuella, this is not an emotional issue.
And what about Arthur Frayn? He's missing.

CONSUELLA
Don't.

MAY
(coldly)
I invoke a commune vote.

CONSUELLA goes pale.

CONSUELLA
(angrily)
The commune will never agree to it.

MAY
Then I'll go to the Vortex

CONSUELLA
Are you trying to hurt me?

27 INT. DRAWING-ROOM OF THE HOUSE DAY

It is a large room with ornate plaster work and four full -length windows giving a view into a garden.

The 'House' is assembled, some twenty five people making up the commune of this rambling Georgian country house.

Beside MAY and CONSUELLA, there are twelve other women in their 20's or early 30's and ten young men. Standing by a window is the very striking girl that 2030 saw in the forest.

In the centre of the room 2030 sits eating a plate of food. He is ravenously hungry and only the embarrassment of being watched by so many people restrains him from wolfing it down.

They wait silently while he finishes, forming a static tableau. They are extremely youthful and attractive. Their clothes are very varied in style, highly individual, and all made from hand-woven cloths.. They sprawl over the room in the languid, bored postures of youth. Their interest, however, is obviously aroused by the phenomenon of 2030 who is now finishing his food.

A lean young man, looking slightly older than the others, goes over to 2030. He has quick, alert eyes and a rather cynical mouth.

He pushes 2030's head to one side to examine his neck and then lifts an eyelid. The young man will come to be known as FRIEND.

FRIEND

Obscenely decaying flesh. The sweet scent of putrefaction already in the air. See how horny is the epidermis. But it's a fine strong beast dear May. What exactly do you want to do with it?

MAY

(quietly)

A full genetic study. Break its DNA code, see if there are any structural or evolutional changes since ours were analysed 200 years ago. Discover any new hereditary disease factors that may have emerged, which might result in broadening our immunization spectrum. Study its emotional and psychic elements in relation to its sociology.

27 Continued

Two of the women have joined FRIEND in poking and prodding 2030. Others are circling him as they listen to the arguments. 2030 wears a sleeveless vest and loose, short trunks.

CONSUELLA
(an amused, languid manner)
That all sounds respectably scientific but what is May up to? Not long ago she was asking for some new births, although we have no deaths for, what? 150 years? We are perfectly stabilized. We said no to May. Now she wants to bring in this dangerous animal from the outside. Think of our equilibrium. What a delicate balance we have to maintain. Just the presence would destroy our tranquility. May is a great scientist, but she is also a destructive bitch.

2030 begins to show signs of irritation with the impersonal poking, probing and jerking to which he is subjected. He does his best to suppress his rising anger.

MAY
We have adequate means of controlling it, surely we're not so vulnerable ...

CONSUELLA
Look at it! It knows its life is at stake, otherwise it would rape and kill as it always has.

A very pretty girl peeps inside 2030's trunks to examine his genitals. From the amused faces and from 2030's acute discomfort it is apparent that the girl is giving his genitals further attention.

The chatter and laughter slowly subsides as they all watch whatever it is the girl is doing. 2030's look of embarrassment turns into something a little more defiant, although very red-faced.

A flutter of excitement ripples through the room as they watch closely, then spontaneous applause breaks out. 2030 is confused by this but aware that events have somehow taken a turn in his favour and he looks around showing his gratification.

27 Continued

CONSUELLA
You can see the disrupting effect -

FRIEND
Let's keep it. Anything to relieve the boredom. Anyway, it's important to find out how it got in.

They begin to argue the case amongst themselves.

CONSUELLA
Ask Avalow. This kind of psychic disturbance could damage her chance of Nirvana.

All eyes turn to the young girl 2030 saw in the woods. She has not moved from her position in the shadows by the window. She is perfectly still and shows no awareness of the attention focused upon her. She looks uncannily like someone alone in a room. There is a strange aura of power around her. The room falls into total silence. Avalow looks at 2030 and he returns her look, a bit shiftily, but somehow calmed and eased by it.

AVALOW
How did we conjure up a monster in our midst, and why? This is the question we must answer.

There is a moment of silence, then they all begin talking earnestly together.

FRIEND saunters over to 2030, smiling his sardonic smile.

FRIEND
Well, you've set the fur flying, my beauty. I wonder what's going on in your pea-brain, eh?

2030 looks at him with a kind of mock innocence, shaking his head as though he has not understood. FRIEND ruffles his hair as he might fondle a dog.

FRIEND
I like you, you sly old monster. Do you hear?

2030 turns his head upward and licks FRIEND's hand, just as a dog would. FRIEND pulls his hand away sharply, a little shocked, a little disgusted.

27 Continued

Then the two men look at each other and smile. There is a kind of understanding between them.

The discussion flutters back and forth across the room in a kind of shorthand. Out of this murmuring emerges the word 'vote' which eventually becomes a chant. A woman speaks.

WOMAN
In favour?

They are like practised buyers at an auction. She counts the little nods and winks that are almost imperceptible to an outsider.

WOMAN
Against?

Her eyes travel over the faces again, making her mental calculation.

2030 searches the faces trying vainly to discover the result. FRIEND smiles down at him.

FRIEND
Congratulations. A stay of execution.
Three weeks.

CONSUELLA takes MAY's arm, but she pulls away.

28 INT. BRAIN-ROOM DAY

MAY is conducting a series of medical tests on 2030 . She holds her communicator against each of his eyes, then she uses it to 'photograph' him in various ways. She fixes a 'sensor' to the communicator and applies it to various parts 2030's body.

He is naked except for the small trunks, and lying on the slab. He follows her with his eyes and they carry a challenge. She is totally concentrated on her work but she meets his eyes from time to time and each time is unquestionably disturbed. When her face comes very close to his there is a powerful physical awareness. She mutters commands, "turn your head", "close your left eye", etc. CONSUELLA stands watching coldly. MAY is determined to be coolly scientific in her presence.

She has the lens of her communicator close to 2030's left eye. She taps the keys. It projects a bright light. She points the communicator at

28 Continued

the wall screen and taps the keys again.

2030's eye projects on to the wall, very large. The retina is clearly illuminated with its lattice of tiny blood cells. MAY studies it closely, when suddenly the screen blanks and lettering appears in its stead.

"CONTINUATION OF TRIAL OF GEORGE SADEN OF COMMUNE 3"

MAY is cross at this interruption of her work.

MAY
Damn.

She and CONSUELLA now ignore 2030 and watch the screen. A face appears on it, the face of a sensitive, effeminate young man (GEORGE)

GEORGE
My defence is extreme provocation,
She's been goading me for twenty years.
We lived together once, and I left her ...
but that was 140 years ago ...

MAY
Why can't they settle this in their own commune?

CONSUELLA
Perhaps they're prejudiced against him.
He has the right to trial by Vortex.

2030, forgotten on his slab, watches these events with interest.

29 INT/EXT. ZOO DAY

A series of wooden cages and penned-up areas. These contain a variety of animals, and many others roam loose over the grass and in the trees. This is not a zoo for people to look at animals, but a kind of Ark, keeping species alive that would otherwise perish in the desolate Outlands.

CONSUELLA, FRIEND, and another man escort 2030 to a strong cage. They lift a bar and put him in it. His neighbours are a Gorilla and an Orang Outang.

FRIEND
(to 2030)
My horse died, so you'll be taking his place while you're here. See you tomorrow.

29 Continued

CONSUELLA's communicator emits a musical 'gong' sound.

COMPUTER VOICE
You wished to be reminded to immunise the Rhesus monkeys today ... You wished to be reminded ...

CONSUELLA presses a key and the voice stops.
FRIEND and the other man go off leaving CONSUELLA alone with 2030. She watches him levelly through the bars. He assumes the postures and expressions of his fellow primates. She points her communicator at him. The Gorilla gets excited and jumps up and down. 2030 copies him in a modest way.

The Orang Outang bares his teeth at CONSUELLA. So does 2030. She suddenly has had enough of it. She gives 2030 the hard look and he collapses on the floor, unconscious. The two primates turn their backs on CONSUELLA, covering their eyes and squealing, obviously familiar with this form of force.

30 EXT. GROUNDS OF GEORGIAN HOUSE DAY

MAY, FRIEND, CONSUELLA and several others stand in a ring around 2030 who is in some kind of fit. He shouts and rages, runs in circles, falls down, screams, swings his arms. His largely inarticulate ravings suggest that he is hallucinating under a drug.

2030
Get up! ... Up ... don't crawl ... set the book
(he reads an imaginary book)
get out ... follow ... kill them all
(he slashes on all sides)
Look out ... No ... no ...
(he cringes in horror)

Suddenly all the wild power drains away and he is calm. He shakes his head and blinks. MAY taps the keys of her communicator and draws on the 'tablet' side with a stylus. The crowd drifts away. FRIEND leads a still dazed 2030 away from the house. As they turn out of sight of the others FRIEND grabs 2030 and slams him against a tree.

FRIEND
Right. Cut out all the nonsense. Where's Arthur Frayn?

30 Continued

2030 blinks in surprise. FRIEND throws him to the ground.

FRIEND
Don't play dumb with me. I'm not like these others. I know more than you think.

2030 says nothing, just looks perplexed. FRIEND lets him go and smiles mysteriously.

FRIEND
Alright. We'll wait and see.

31 EXT. MUSEUM DAY

FRIEND and 2030 approach a windowless factory building lying in a copse of trees. 2030 looks about him taking everything in. He glances at FRIEND and decides to risk asking a question.

2030
(hesitant)
Where's the palace, then?

FRIEND
What?

2030
Your leaders.

FRIEND starts to laugh as he opens a small door by pressing it at certain points in a given order.

2030
Kings? Gods?

FRIEND
Perhaps you are as dumb as you look.

FRIEND gives him a hefty kick on the backside, pitching 2030 into the building.

32 INT. MUSEUM DAY

2030 is confronted by a huge storehouse of Art. Paintings and sculptures stretch away in long lines, separated by corridors: the aspirations, the visions, the idealized women, the yearnings of the past.

32 Continued

FRIEND
Here they are. Gods, Goddesses, kings - Take your pick.

FRIEND leads the way down a corridor of Etruscan and Egyptian sculpture.

FRIEND
But they're all dead, monster.

2030
Dead? The Gods?

FRIEND
Died of boredom.

He laughs again and it echoes against the high roof.

33 INT. FRIEND'S LIVING AREA MUSEUM DAY

A small area partitioned-off as a living area. There is an ornate 18th century French four-poster bed. Next to it a glass and chrome table with chairs. There are shelves of books, the first in evidence in the Vortex.

2030 is sweeping the floor, FRIEND is working at a desk, his communicator projecting on to the white screen in front of him. He has a filing tray in front of him. It contains hundreds of small, rectangular white plastic cards. Each is labelled and tabulated. He selects one and puts it into his communicator, rather as one might load a portable recorder with a tape-cassette. A series of pictures of American Ford cars project on the screen.

The image changes rapidly, the models starting in the 1920s and moving towards the seventies. FRIEND watches but suddenly gets angry.

FRIEND
That's wrong! Wrong!

COMPUTER VOICE
It is catalogued according to your instructions.

FRIEND
Typical pedantic response! I wanted you to analyse design growth across all makes of car - not just a chronological list from one manufacturer.

33 Continued

2030 notices a rack of weapons. Making sure FRIEND does not observe him, he examines the guns.

COMPUTER
A much more complex programme.

FRIEND
So what?

COMPUTER
It will take time. There is a stack up on some circuits.

FRIEND
Well, I've got time! Plenty of it. No don't argue and don't be bloody-minded.

2030 slips a .38 revolver into his pocket.

34 EXT. VILLAGE OF THE APATHETICS DAY

A gaunt, decaying cluster of cottages. There are one or two windmills and the familiar solar-cell fan arms on the roof-tops. No one in sight at first. A cart comes into view, 2030 in the shafts. It is drawing a load of bread loaves and sacks of provisions. FRIEND rides the cart, driving it lazily. 2030 stops from time to time, lifting off sacks and leaning them on doorsteps. The soft 'gong' call;sign sounds from FRIEND's communicator.

COMPUTER VOICE
You are asked to vote at the termination of the trial of George Saden. Final statement from the accused begins in twenty seconds.

At this point 2030 notices that there are faces at many of the windows. They are young and beautiful but they stare out blankly.

FRIEND
Four sacks in there.

He indicates what was once a chapel of some sort. 2030 lifts the heavy sacks with apparent ease. FRIEND leads the way, opens the door for him and they enter.

35 INT. CHAPEL DAY

A dozen Apathetics sit on benches scattered about the bare interior. Their heads follow the two men as they enter, but the faces are expressionless.
2030 dumps the sacks and FRIEND points his communicator at what was once the Altar.
The face of GEORGE SADEN projects on to the wall. He is calm at first, but by the end of his speech he is twitching with insanity. The Apathetics turn their heads and watch the projection dully.

GEORGE SADEN
I've always done my bit, turn and turn about. My work is my life. My life's work was my life. She ran counter to it. Dumb insolence in the face of hydroponics. Nothing you could put your finger on. The last forty years were' the straw that broke the camel's back. So I killed her again.

The image fades. FRIEND turns away in disgust. 2030 looks uneasily at the dead faces around them.

COMPUTER VOICE
Vote please. Vote please.

FRIEND
I'm voting for the poor sod. It won't do any good. Nothing does.

He presses a key on his communicator. He points the lens to another part of the wall which lights up. Totals for and against begin to appear on it. One or two Apathetics go to the food sacks and nibble bread without appetite or enthusiasm. FRIEND looks round at them. 2030 goes over to a very pretty girl. He smiles at her but gets no response. He reaches out and squeezes her tit. She frowns and brushes his hand away as though a fly was troubling her.

FRIEND
Monster! You are witnessing the end result of eternal life. Apathy.

2030 looks about him wildly. He picks the girl up and kisses her fiercely. She submits lifelessly. FRIEND laughs tauntingly.

FRIEND
Did Zardoz tell you about the Apathetics? No?

35 Continued

2030 pushes the girl away in disgust. She crumples up in a corner. 2030 seems stifled and terrified by this.

FRIEND
It's a disease and it's slowly creeping all through the Vortexes. That's why Zardoz made you grow crops. To feed all of these. We can't manage anymore.

2030
Why not you?

FRIEND
Because I've got something to live for. Anger! Anger and hate. But this will get us all in the end.

2030 picks up a table and hurls it against the wall.

2030
(roars)
No! I'm alive!

He jumps in the air, turns a somersault. Then he cartwheels across the floor. All the time he cries out. A great cry of life, a rejection of death. It is directed like a challenge at the placid faces about him. The Apathetics stir. Some rise to their feet. They watch him, his vitality reviving them a little. The girl huddled in the corner watches him wide-eyed. She begins to tremble. An emotion - fear perhaps - crosses her lifeless features. 2030 stops, exhausted, his head drooping. FRIEND is fascinated and also suspicious. He claps ironically.

FRIEND
Well, well - Now we see your true colours. This is more like it.

The computer 'gong' sounds, diverting attention.

COMPUTER VOICE
Final count as follows:-
For: 9, Against: 583, Undecided: 86.
Sentence: George Saden will be aged five years.

FRIEND scowls at this, the Apathetics settle back into their torpor, 2030 stands motionless, without expression.

35 Continued

FRIEND
Welcome to Paradise.

36 INT. LECTURE THEATRE DAY

Half a dozen members of the Commune sit in the steeply raked rows of wooden benches. MAY and CONSUELLA stand on the stage together with 2030 who sits on a chair, at the side of the stage, half-facing the audience and half-facing a white screen behind him, on which is projected an enormous drawing of an erect penis. FRIEND watches, shrewd and alert, in contrast to the bored aspects of the rest of the audience. CONSUELLA is lecturing in a dry, academic manner.

CONSUELLA
Penic erection. It was already a problem in mortal times for the ageing male, whilst women, generally speaking, found their sexual appetites improve with age. This was one of the many unsolved evolutionary mysteries surrounding sexuality. Every society had an elaborate sub-culture devoted to erotic stimulation...

On the white screen flash the following images: a Victorian photograph of an abundant lady coyly removing her copious undergarments; Burt Reynolds in his naked Cosmopolitan pose; an erotic Hindu temple carving

... but nobody could discover how this ...

Drawing of flaccid penis appears on the screen. She taps it sharply with her wooden pointer.

... becomes this.

Drawing of erect penis. She taps it with her pointer again.

Of course we know the physical processes involved, but not the link between stimulus and response.

Someone yawns in the audience. 2030 watches carefully, his eyes drinking in everything.

On the screen appears a picture of a bearded Indian lying on a couch on a small stage.

36 Continued

CONSUELLA
This man, an Indian Fakir, used to appear at a Paris nightclub in the 1930's. Remaining totally still he would achieve erection and orgasm without any visual or physical stimulant.

Picture fades.

There seems to be a correlation with violence - with fear. Many hanged men died with an erection. You are all more or less aware of our intensive researches into this subject. Despite arresting the ageing process, Eternals found erection more and more difficult. Females, on the other hand, remained potent and we entered the Lesbian Phase. They in turn found their sexual appetites gradually declining, probably due to the tendency towards Apathy. Fortunately we are no longer victims of this convulsive, violent act which so debased women - and betrayed men.

She now moves over to 2030 and changes the sensors to his head. She swivels his chair so that he is facing the screen.

This Brutal - like other primates living unselfconscious lives - is capable of spontaneous and reflexive erections. As part of May's studies of this creature we are trying once again to find the link between erotic stimulation and erection. This experiment will measure auto-erotic stimulation of the cortex leading to erection.

CONSUELLA taps out a signal on her Communicator. On the screen appears a belly dancer, performing to music. Superimposed is an electrograph registering 2030's response. At the moment it shows a regular very small undulation. As it fails to rise CONSUELLA frowns and taps another combination on the Communicator. The picture changes to a voluptuous, rather fat girl soaping herself under a shower. Again the graph fails to respond. 2030's face is implacable, except for a hint of malicious humour around the eyes. In the audience, FRIEND laughs behind his hand. MAY watches 2030 suspiciously.

36 Continued

CONSUELLA is becoming increasingly disconcerted. She whispers something to MAY who nods. Meanwhile she changes the image to two pretty girls wrestling in mud. MAY goes to 2030 and begins to run her hands over his thighs, stomach and neck. He remains determinedly stoical. There is no response. It is becoming clear to MAY that 2030 is somehow controlling his response. She signals to CONSUELLA who comes over and looks sternly into 2030's face. A slight smile crosses his mouth and behind CONSUELLA the graph on the screen begins to oscillate wildly. The audience giggle. MAY turns and sees the graph and then back at 2030 still looking into CONSUELLA's eyes.

CONSUELLA whips round and sees the screen. She turns back flushed and disconcerted. The audience is openly laughing now at her embarrassment.

CONSUELLA
(to 2030)
Stop it! Stop that!

But he smiles sweetly into her angry face. The graph oscillates wildly and MAY looks on with what is obviously a growing and tangible jealousy.

37 INT. COMMUNICATOR SCREEN NIGHT

Beautiful coloured abstract patterns move across the screen. Clusters of spinning balls move through space in a mysterious, ever-changing relationship.

38 INT. GENETICS LABORATORY DAY

The plain walls are filled with projected images in ever-changing abstract patterns. Clusters of spinning spheres move through space in mysterious relationships.
2030 sits at the centre of the room, a shaft of light illuminating his face harshly. MAY circles him, the coloured images occasionally lighting her face. Her voice is harsh, her movements agitated.

MAY
Don't you recognise your own genes?

2030
Of course not.

38 Continued

MAY
You're a fraud, a liar.

2030
(indicates the wall images)
You can tell from that?

MAY
You're a mutant, a genetically stable mutant - second generation. Enlarged brain, total recall, physically and mentally vastly superior to me or anyone here.

2030
I don't understand any of that.

MAY
How many are there? How many Mutants?

He says nothing, watching her carefully.

MAY
How did you get into the Vortex? What are you up to?

2030
(sullen)
I'm just a Brutal. I know nothing.

MAY confronts him, eyes blazing. She looks deep into him. She whispers, but her voice is still steely,

MAY
You are dangerous. I must destroy you.

2030
Do it then. I know death. I'm ready.

MAY
You're not ready. Nobody is ever ready.

2030
Try me.

She paces up and down, thinking deeply.

38 Continued

MAY
There's another way. It's risky, but the situation is desperate. If I reveal this information you'll be killed immediately.

2030
Why wouldn't you tell then?

MAY
You might be useful to my plans.

2030
Whatever you say.

39 INT. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN EVENING

A long dining room table seats all the inhabitants of the house, some twenty five or thirty people. Included amongst them are MAY, AVALOW and CONSUELLA.

The table is set with the now familiar home-made cutlery and pottery. There are large bowls of vegetables, bread, cheese and so on.

There is a gay, teasing atmosphere. They resemble an overgrown family, laughing, squabbling, reaching across one another, chattering in a kind of rapid shorthand.

FRIEND is running back and forth from the kitchen with dishes of steaming food. He is flustered and perspiring.

2030 is assisting him. He waits on table with a kind of exaggerated servility, moving slowly from place to place, serving potatoes. FRIEND is irritated by his slowness.

*FRIEND*
Get a move on you silly beast.

2030 takes no notice. Some of the girls tease him as he leans over them, but 2030 bows his head in humility in answer to their taunts. There is nothing malicious about this, however, and they seem to enjoy having him around.

CONSUELLA, however, glances at 2030 from time to time with evident distaste. His presence is clearly upsetting her. MAY's eyes return again and again to 2030, watching his movements, obviously fascinated by him and also aware of CONSUELLA's antipathy.

39 Continued

As 2030 approaches her, CONSUELLA becomes very tense. Finally she bursts into speech, unable to conceal her emotions.

CONSUELLA
Friend, put that thing outside!

FRIEND is just at that moment slumping, hot and sweaty, into his own place at the table. He looks up surprised, not sure what she means for a moment, then quickly following her look to 2030 and seeing her revulsion.

FRIEND
(sweetly reasonable)
Anyone else bothered? Let's take a vote Consuella.

2030 comes up to her place and mutely offers her potatoes in a ladle. She starts to tremble.

CONSUELLA
(quietly, her voice just under control)
It is Friend's day to make the food. He must do it without help as we all do. It is fundamental to our society that we do everything for ourselves on a basis of absolute equality, and Friend knows that perfectly well.

2030 has stood awkwardly with his ladle of potatoes at CONSUELLA's elbow.

2030
(in a strong, clear voice)
Yes or No!

CONSUELLA whips round to face him.

CONSUELLA
How dare you interfere? This is preposterous.

2030
(innocently)
Potatoes! Yes or no.

39 Continued

The table explodes with delighted laughter, much to CONSUELLA's discomfort, 2030 breaks the confrontation by moving on to the next person with his potatoes.

FRIEND
I say get more 2030s to do the work.
We have eternal life and yet we sentence
ourselves to all this drudgery. I tell
you, I'm sick of 200 years of washing up
and I'm sick of pitting my bare hands
(he points out the window)
against the blind brute stupidity of nature.

The atmosphere at the table darkens, the good humour evaporating. MAY sizes up the situation shrewdly, concerned about the intensity of the protagonists, CONSUELLA and FRIEND.

MAY
(quietly)
Consuella is right. 2030 should not slip
into the role of servant. It is here for
scientific study. It can earn its keep on
the land, but it should not do this kind of
thing.

CONSUELLA
It is high time you finished your study, May,
and destroyed it. See how it constantly
disrupts our community.

Her view is borne out by the agitated atmosphere around the table. The food is quite forgotten.

GIRL
How can you say that in front of 2030.
Even a monster has feelings.

CONSUELLA
(angry)
Vote!

FRIEND
(angrier)
Yes, vote!

The bickering and squabbling increase. MAY looks anxiously at 2030. Only AVALOW is uninvolved. Her glance goes from MAY to 2030, penetrating, understanding.

39 Continued

Suddenly AVALOW stretches out her hand to the centre of the table where it hovers and flutters with a strangely independent movement. A long, low musical note utters from her. The members of the commune respond immediately. They quieten and become calm. The arguing stops.

AVALOW
The monster is a mirror and when we look
at him we look into our hidden faces ...
meditate on this at Second Level ...

A distant, trance-like look comes upon the faces, as they move into a level of consciousness where 2030 cannot follow.

He looks about him shiftily. He touches MAY's face, but she does not respond. He flashes his hand before her eyes and she does not blink. He backs away watching them warily. He edges towards the door and darts away.

40 EXT. FIELD IN FRONT OF GEORGIAN HOUSE DAY

Some horses graze peacefully in the field. 2030 approaches the finest and fiercest. It shies away. He follows after it, running. The horse gallops, 2030 sprints. Amazingly, beautifully 2030 slowly gains on the horse. Straining hard he finally comes up alongside it. He seizes its mane and hauls himself up. The horse skitters and bucks, then gallops off, 2030 guiding it by its mane. It is an exhilarating sight and gives an insight into the powers of this mutant.

41 EXT. THE PERIPHERY DAY

2030 gallops up to the boundary of the Vortex. This is marked by a scorched furrow, some ten yards wide. But what is more apparent is that the lush, cultivated vegetation of the commune gives way to the poisoned, arid soil of the Outlands where only lichen and ferns grow.

He dismounts and runs to the border. He collides heavily with an invisible wall. He moves along it, testing it, finding it solid and inpenetrable. He mounts up again and rides hard along the perimeter looking out searchingly to the Outlands. He pulls the horse up. Across the border, some way off are three horsemen riding around the wall in the other direction. They see 2030 and stop. They look across at 2030. and he stares back. He pulls out the revolver and raises it, perhaps to shoot at them, perhaps a sign. At this they turn their horses and ride away. 2030 turns also and gallops back the way he came.

42 EXT. COTTAGE DAY

2030 rides up on his sweating horse. He comes alongside the conservatory. AVALOW stands inside amongst the flora. Her stillness, the intervening glass, the vegetation give her an ethereal, insubstantial air. He gets down from the horse and taps on the glass.

2030
I have to talk to you.

She makes no response. He taps harder.

2030
It's important.

He peers in at her. She is decked out in jewels, except for which she is naked. She has sapphires in her hair, rubies round her neck, diamonds on her arms and across her breasts. She holds her hand out before her and in it are three large, cut diamonds and several plant seeds. He bangs on the glass. She remains totally impassive. He flushes with angry frustration and bangs the glass again. This time it smashes. But still she does not move. She stands before him vulnerable and yet unflinching. He is taken aback by his own violence, abashed.

2030
Sorry about that. I...

He searches her face for a response. She seems to be looking at her outstretched hand. He follows her eyes to the diamonds. He picks one out and holds it to the light.

A close view of it shows coloured light reflected inside it. For a moment the light is in motion and produces a rapid succession of geometric shapes, like the genetic codes MAY showed him. He strains to decipher it but it disappears. He looks from the gemstones to AVALOW.

2030
This is some kind of clue. The stones and seeds.

He reaches his hand through the broken panes. His fingers have a little blood on them. He touches her cheek very gently leaving traces of red on her white skin. He runs his hand down the line of her breast touching the cold gems.

2030
I've seen men rape an old cripple woman in a wet ditch.

He struggles to control a surge of emotion. His hand trembles.

42 Continued

2030
You're so damned perfect!

He breaks away violently, mounts his horse, digs in his heels so that it leaps forward into some brush. A dozen peacocks scatter from under the horse's hooves screaming, as they do, just like young children.

He reins in the horse harshly, turning it on the peacocks, surveying them with blazing angry eyes. The 'eyes' in the tails seem to stare mockingly at him.

He pulls the gun to his eye, aiming at the peacock's tail. He fires, a neat hole appears in one of the 'eyes'. More chilling screams from the peacocks.

43 EXT. GROUNDS OF GEORGIAN HOUSE DAY

2030 rides slowly through undulating, sparsely wooded meadows. The Georgian house is on his left. There is a Corinthian pillar near the house, the remains of an ornate gazebo. A man sits on top of it, cross-legged, deep in meditation.

2030 passes an old oak tree. TWO WOMEN sit in its branches, perfectly still, staring out sightlessly through the leaves.

He spurs the horse into a canter. He passes other mediators. They litter the landscape, statuesque. He steers the horse close to them but none of them move an eyelid.

Through the trees ahead is the windowless factory building of the Museum.

44 EXT. MUSEUM DAY

2030 draws up to the building and dismounts.
He goes to the small door and presses on it at several points in a practised way. It opens and he steps inside,

45 INT. MUSEUM DAY

He walks down the lines of paintings and sculptures to the partitioned area where FRIEND lives.

FRIEND is absent. 2030 looks around puzzled. Then he hears the unmistakable sounds of destruction: tearing, smashing, ripping, rending. 2030 moves quickly towards the sounds.

He turns a corner to discover FRIEND in the middle of an orgy of destruction. He is laying about him with an iron bar, smashing Chinese vases, Etruscan pots. Impressionist paintings are ripped and punctured. In front of him is a huge Hindu stone carving of a naked mother and child. The woman has enormous breasts and stomach and vast thighs.

He strikes her with the iron bar, but it bounces off, making little impression. FRIEND is in a passionate rage. 2030 stands watching him with some amusement. FRIEND sees him grinning there and swings the bar at him, scything the air. 2030 ducks neatly to avoid it.

FRIEND hurls the bar away and throws himself bodily at the Hindu sculpture. He hammers his fists on her face. Then he steps back and smashes his body against her again.

He is soon bleeding and lacerated. He falls to the ground stunned. 2030 goes over and pulls him to his feet by his jacket. FRIEND makes no effort to stand and 2030 holds him dangling like a broken toy. FRIEND is breathless from his exertions. 2030 looks into his face.

2030
What do you have against the lady there?

He nods his head in the direction of the Hindu Madonna.

FRIEND
(panting)
Women ... birth ... fertility ... Superstition ... they all go together ... the eternal enemies of man ...

2030 half carries, half drags FRIEND to a fortuitously situated Celtic throne and sits him upon it. He picks up a torn piece of delicate embroidery from one of the broken picture frames and wipes the blood from FRIEND's face.

2030
And what are you <u>for</u>?

45 Continued

FRIEND
Sweet death. Oblivion.

2030
Just for yourself? Or everyone?

FRIEND
For everyone. I'm a democrat. I want a totally lifeless planet. Peace.

FRIEND is getting over his violent rage and sinks instead into a melancholy gloom. He leans on the arm of the throne, chin in hand. 2030 looks around at the havoc.

2030
Do you get punished for something like this?

FRIEND
Of course.

2030
But you have no police, no exterminators.

FRIEND allows himself a bitter laugh.

FRIEND
Oh, we discuss it endlessly. Talk, talk, talk. Every little sin and misdemeanor. Raked over and over -

2030
Then what?

FRIEND
I'll get ten years for this.

2030
Prison?

FRIEND bursts out laughing at this suggestion.

FRIEND
Aging.

2030
Aging?

45 Continued

FRIEND
Yes. I'll be aged, I've had two threes and a four already.

2030
Well, if you're real bad, eventually you get to die?

FRIEND
(shakes his head)
They make you old, but you never die.

2030
Why don't you kill yourself?

FRIEND
Because the infernal Tabernacle just rebuilds us. Do you want to see immortality at work?

46 INT. DINING ROOM CASTLE HOTEL DAY

Some thirty decrepit, crippled, old people are spread about the room. They are playing cards, arguing, brawling, fighting with sticks. Some are blind, others arthritic. TWO BLIND MEN fight with white sticks. Some sleep through it all. Their clothes are stained and ragged. There is dirt and litter everywhere. A few are eating greedily, others try to snatch the food from them. These are the Renegades.

FRIEND (V.O.)
They are condemned to an eternity of senility. We provide them with food. But they are shunned. The odour of putrifaction is repugnant to us. Or most of us. I myself feel at home up there.

FRIEND and 2030 now step into view. FRIEND makes a flamboyant entrance, arms raised like an electioneering politician. There are ironic cheers and some genuine ones. Also rude signs, jeers and raspberries.

FRIEND's wounds have been patched up. He gestures for quiet and assumes a speech-making posture. A malicious, bright-eyed look has replaced the earlier melancholy.

46 Continued

FRIEND
Hear this, you old farts. Meet this creature from the world outside.

He raises 2030's hand like a boxer's. A suspicious mumbling is the response to this.

FRIEND
This man has the gift of death. He metes it out, and he can die himself. He is mortal. He's stolen a gun. He thinks he can kill us all, poor fool.

They are immensely curious. They gather around 2030, touching him, fawning. Some of the old women try to kiss him.

FRIEND
Why don't we give him back to Death. Glorious Death! Silent Death!

He whips up their spirits. They start to pull at 2030's clothing, to push and tug him. 2030 looks sorrowfully at FRIEND.

2030
Why do they call you Friend?

FRIEND
Enemy would be nicer, eh?

2030 edges towards the wall, but the old people crowd around him, getting more and more spiteful. 2030 looks questioningly at FRIEND.

2030
Why?

FRIEND
I want to save you from those women - and the misery of immortality. I know what's been going on.

He turns to the crowd again in his rhetorical manner.

FRIEND
They want to use him to spawn another generation to suffer our agonies!

46 Continued

The old people are in a frenzy. Despite their infirmities they are determined to tear 2030 to pieces. He pushes them away, trying to get to the door. One old man jumps on his back and bites his neck. 2030 hits out, knocking several old people to the ground.

He is fighting for his life. One of his arms is pinned. One-handed, he punches his assailants. Once again he demonstrates his extraordinary agility. Dodging and weaving he makes it to the door. He grabs the handle to make his escape. FRIEND is a few feet away.

FRIEND

2030!

2030 looks up at FRIEND who fixes him with the same hypnotic look used by MAY earlier. 2030 slumps against the wall, helpless.

FRIEND

Did you ever hear the saying "If looks could kill"? Well, here they can.

FRIEND waves off the old people, giving them the same terrifying look. They fall back, covering their eyes, crying out in pain. They hang in a circle about FRIEND and 2030.

FRIEND

And I'm going to kill you unless you do what I say.

2030 struggles for consciousness. He staggers against the wall then falls forward into the old people, who claw at him again until moved back by FRIEND's signals.

FRIEND

Do you hear me?

2030 nods assent. FRIEND grabs hold of 2030 and holds him close. He whispers in his ear.

FRIEND

You're a mutant. You have to help me destroy the Tabernacle, so we can all die.

2030

How?

FRIEND

May is the top scientist here. She could do it. Make her. She'd do anything for you. Especially if you make a baby for her.

46 Continued

2030
Now wait a minute.

FRIEND
(turning on him)
Can't you see what May wants with you?
A stud for supermen.

He spits out the bitter words.

2030 is recovering. The old people begin to lose interest and drift away. FRIEND pulls 2030 further down the room. They speak in hushed voices.

2030
Where is it? The Tabernacle?

FRIEND
We don't know. That's the point.

2030
Well, who set it up like this? He would know how to fix it, surely.

FRIEND
You can meet one of them for yourself. Are you with me?

He looks into 2030's face. 2030 nods.

2030
Yes.

He leads 2030 to an OLD MAN sitting in a corner of the room. FRIEND prods him, but there is no sign of response. He is completely ga-ga. It is the old man who pointed at 2030 through the window.

FRIEND
Here's one of our founders. One of the geniuses who discovered immortality. But he found he didn't like it himself. He went a little crazy and this is what his grateful people did to him.

He leans over and shouts into the OLD MAN's ear.

46 Continued

FRIEND
We want to die! What's the trick?

The OLD MAN slowly raises his arm and touches 2030's face. He looks at 2030 and the OLD MAN's face breaks into a toothless grin.

OLD MAN
(a thin, wheezing voice)
Death!

FRIEND recoils.

FRIEND
Disgusting! You disgust me!
Talk to May. She's the only hope.

But 2030 does not move, instead he looks deep into the OLD MAN's watering eyes.

47 INT. MAY'S ROOM DAY

She is sitting cross-legged facing the window in deep-trance. He sits opposite her and looks hard at her face. Something about it moves him. He looks away, trying to subdue his emotion, then back at her again. There is a sadness about him.

He sighs and takes out his gun. He empties it, all but one bullet. He spins the chamber then holds it to his temple. He fires. Just a loud click. MAY's body jerks slightly and her eyes focus. She takes in the gun and looks at him questioningly.

MAY
Why?

2030
(shrugs)
Chance. See what chance has to say.

MAY
Dicing with death.

2030
That's my game.

47 Continued

MAY
You love to kill. Why?
(she looks hard
into his eyes)
Show me pictures.

He starts to sweat, discomforted. She presses on him with her look.

48 EXT. HILLSIDE (MEMORY) DAY

Repeat of the first scene. Just a fragment of it. ZARDOZ stands high on the hill-top, like the ghost of Hamlet's father.

ZARDOZ
Ye are the chosen!
Go forth into the Outlands and kill!

The voice roars with echo over the bleak hills.

MAY (V.O.)
Do you believe in Zardoz?

The image fades into black.

49 INT. MAY'S ROOM DAY

2030
Zardoz is our only God. He moves in
mysterious ways.

MAY searches his face for irony.

MAY
You were happy giving death?

50 EXT. DERELICT CITY STREET (MEMORY) DAY

Boarded-over windows, crumbling facades. The garbage in the street makes it clear that no vehicles have used the surface for many years. Two ragged Brutals come running barefoot down the street, 2030 and two companions in pursuit on horseback.

50 Continued

2030 (V.O.)
Zardoz gave us the gun. We rode out. I knew truth. Man is born to hunt and kill. But something happened. It changed everything. I lost my innocence.

The Brutals reach a junction and run to the left. The horsemen follow, but something catches 2030's eye: just a flash of a face in a high window. It is a public building. 2030 gets off his horse and goes in, gun in hand. The riders are just visible in the background, putting the Brutals to the sword.

51 INT. LIBRARY (MEMORY) DAY

He finds himself inside a public library, surrounded by shelves of books. Many are rotten with decay and mildew is crawling over their covers. Some have fallen to the ground or been thrown there.

2030 moves cautiously, silently. He passes a heap of charred books on the floor which has apparently served as a fire at some point. He passes into an area where there are several reading tables, severely ravaged by dry rot and woodworm.

Huddled at one of the desks is a man reading a book: His face is shadowy, but it bears a distinct resemblance to Arthur Frayn. 2030 raises his gun to fire. The man has his head down and is unmoved. Just as 2030 is about to shoot the man turns a page. It fascinates and puzzles 2030. He lowers the gun and watches.

MAY (V.O.)
Why did you spare him?

2030
Something. I don't know.

The man glances up, sees 2030 and goes back to his book. 2030 is perplexed.

MAY (V.O.)
Had you seen a book before?

2030 (V.O.)
Never.

51 Continued

The man gets up, goes to a shelf, turns and crooks his finger to 2030. 2030 goes over to him. There is a just discernible sign over this section which says 'CHILDREN'S BOOKS'. The man pulls out a book and shows it to 2030. It is called 'Learn to Read' and is full of pictures with the appropriate words under. 2030 looks at it. When he looks up the man is gone.

MAY (V.O.)
You learnt to read?

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
How long did it take?

2030 (V.O.)
It came easy.

Several QUICK SHOTS of 2030 reading in different parts of the library. He reads with incredible speed and concentration, turning the pages every three seconds. Finally he picks a book off a shelf. It is very decayed. He reads the title. He quickly scans the pages, turning them rapidly. He looks up from the book, pale and shocked.

MAY (V.O.)
What was the book? What was the name of the book?

But the title is not visible, only 2030's face, full of bitterness and hatred. He tears the book apart, ripping out pages, hurling it at the wall.

2030 (V.O.)
I don't remember.

52 INT. MAY'S ROOM DAY

MAY
Are you telling the truth?

2030
(incensed)
Sure, I am. I'm giving you pictures, aren't I?

52 Continued

MAY
You're inventing, withholding. I can feel it.

2030
(hurt)
I'm doing the best I can.

MAY
How did you get into the Airship?

2030
Don't know.

MAY
Of course you know.

2030
I can't remember.

2030 starts sweating. His eyes roll and his breathing is shallower.

MAY
How did you get into Arthur's transporter?

FLASH CUT of 2030 opening Arthur's "coffin", but Arthur cannot be seen.

MAY
You knew that Arthur was Zardoz, didn't you?

2030
No.

MAY
Did you kill Arthur?

FLASH CUT of 2030 as he forced ARTHUR's body out of the Airship. The seeds swirl around his head, but ARTHUR is not visible in the scene, only 2030's face full of effort and the swirling seeds.

2030 (V.O.)
No!

MAY (V.O.)
Show me the whole image. What are you doing?

52 Continued

2030 (V.O.)
NO!

Finally a flash of ARTHUR's face as 2030 pushes him out of the Airship.

2030 is racked with convulsions but MAY watches him coolly.

MAY
You poor devil. You murdered your God ... By accident ... or was it an accident?

2030 tries to scramble away. A convulsion jolts through him as MAY turns on him, felling him..

MAY
Show me that book!

53 INT. LIBRARY (MEMORY) DAY

The same image repeated. The shocked face of 2030 and again moving in close on the book. The scene goes black for a moment.

MAY (V.O.)
No!

The image returns. 2030 runs from the library, shouting.

2030
It's a trick! It's all a trick!

The image blacks again.

54 INT. MAY'S ROOM DAY

MAY
(imperative)
What was a trick? Tell me!

2030's head sags on his chest. His eyes roll as though in coma.

2030
Zardoz said no more .. Said stop ...

55 EXT. DESOLATE PLAIN (MEMORY) DAY

2030 and his five friends are herding a crowd of Brutals, driving them like cattle. Some of the Exterminators use whips.

MAY (V.O.)
Zardoz told you not to kill anymore.

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
But to take prisoners.

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
To make slaves.

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
To cultivate instead of kill.

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
To grow wheat.

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
Did you need wheat?

2030 (V.O.)
No. We ate meat.

They herd the Brutals towards some others who are digging at stony soil with rough, improvised implements.

56 INT. MAY'S ROOM DAY

MAY
By now you knew about Zardoz, or guessed
... That book.

56 Continued

2030
No.

MAY
Show how you got into the transporter.
Show!

57 EXT. TILLED FIELDS DAY

Sacks of grain are loaded onto several horse-drawn carts. 2030 and his six men supervise. Overhead the airship appears, passing slowly over them. The BRUTALS fall down, trembling with fear, burying their faces in the soil.

BRUTALS
ZARDOZ comes! ZARDOZ comes out of heaven!

2030 and the six glance at each other conspiratorially and then watch the ship. 2030 has a slight cynical smile. They start to ride off in the same direction as the Airship.

MAY (V.O.)
Your friends were Mutants too?

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
You had a plot?

2030 (V.O.)
Yes.

MAY (V.O.)
Revenge?

2030 (V.O.)
The truth. We wanted the truth.

58 EXT. CASTLE DAY

A ruined castle, but the outer walls are intact and the gate sound. The Airship is moored to its inner tower.

58 Continued

The BRUTALS with their carts of grain together with 2030 and the horsemen are assembled at the gate.

ZARDOZ materialises, a ghostly figure on the battlements. The BRUTALS cry out and fall to their knees. ZARDOZ speaks, his voice comes like the roar of the sea from the castle walls.

ZARDOZ
Zardoz spares your lives! Zardoz sends sun and rain for your crops! But Zardoz demands that you show your love! Give your sacrifice to Zardoz!

59 INT. LIBRARY DAY

Moving in on the book. 2030's shocked face.

MAY (V.O.)
Show it. What is the book.

CLOSER on the book, until the title is clear - The Wizard of Oz.

60 INT. COURTYARD OF CASTLE DAY

The gates open and the terrified BRUTALS drive in their carts and unload the sacks of grain. They scuttle out again as fast as they can. 2030, however, ducks down amongst the sacks, hiding.

The gates close, revealing ARTHUR FRAYN turning the winch which works them.

61 INSERT WIZARD OF OZ BOOK

A picture of the Wizard of Oz revealed behind his curtain as an old man.

2030 (V.O.)
I saw the trick.

MAY
So that was it.

61 Continued

2030
Wizard of Oz ... Zardoz.

His hand enters frame and blocks off the first two letters of the title, making - - ZARD of OZ ...

62 INT. COURTYARD DAY

2030 and his companions watch from various hiding places. They have remained inside.

ARTHUR then turns to his communicator and begins to speak into it and act out the role and gestures of ZARDOZ. Above them on the battlements the amplified hologramme of ZARDOZ appears again. 2030 glances from one to the other.

ZARDOZ
Zardoz is pleased. He will watch over you. Work hard and grow good crops and Zardoz will love you.

2030 and his companions watch from the shadows, cold and predatory.
Outside the BRUTALS kneel in obeisance.

MAY (V. O.)
So that was the way of it. It was so long ago. The Wizard of Oz technique was a simple way of controlling the Outlands in the way that the Wizard of Oz frightened people with his booming voice and awesome palace.

63 INT. MAY'S ROOM DAY

2030
It was a cheap trick played on people's lives to get your dirty work done for you.

MAY
The rich have always done the same to the poor.

2030
A lie.

63 Continued

MAY
Is the truth more palatable? I don't think so. History shows that superstitious religion is usually preferred to truth.

2030
Well, the truth is what I want.

MAY
So you thought you would destroy us.

2030
Yes.

MAY
And you find us indestructible.

2030
(carefully)
Not necessarily.

MAY looks at him sharply.

MAY
I suppose Friend has enlisted your help in his quest for extinction.

2030
He says you could crack the Tabernacle.

He reaches out and touches her face, her hair with an unexpected gentleness.

MAY
Does he now.

2030
How are your auto-erotic cortical responses?

She is amused by his skilful manoeuvring of the situation.

He kisses her. She shudders.

63 Continued

MAY
There's no necessity for this. All I need is a sample ...

She turns away from him. He takes hold of her from behind, covering her breasts with his hands.

... of your semen. It can be implanted scientifically.

2030
You can't be as cold as you seem.

MAY
There can be no emotional complications.

She turns and he locks her in his arms.

2030
There has to be love or hate.

She is still unyielding.

MAY
My body is young, but I'm old and empty.

It is like an apology.
Then looks over his shoulder her eyes freeze. CONSUELLA has entered the room. She stands watching them, triumphant.

CONSUELLA
So this is your scientific investigation. There's another word for it - bestiality!

2030 lets go of MAY and moves towards CONSUELLA, assuming a crouching, pouncing posture.
She turns from MAY, her coldness blazing into anger. She hits him with the 'look'. He convulses and crashes to the floor.

CONSUELLA
(to May)
For this you will be aged fifty years, no less. No man or beast will ever desire you again.

63 Continued

2030 stirs into consciousness, shakes his head, grits his teeth and forces himself to his feet. He starts for CONSUELLA again. She 'hits' him again. He drops to his knees and fights to stay conscious. He rises again. CONSUELLA is horrified. She concentrates all her power on another 'hit'. It convulses 2030 but he shakes it off and keeps coming. MAY watches, astonished. CONSUELLA is defeated. She lets out a wail of fear.

CONSUELLA
May. Help me.

2030 is upon her. He is the wild beast she expected. He picks her up and hurls her across the room and on to the bed. He holds her by the hair and tears off her clothes. She is gasping for breath, like a child sobbing.

MAY goes to help her, pulling at 2030. For the first time she is aroused emotionally. She screams and claws at 2030. He stops surprised by the change in her.

MAY
Go! Go quickly!

He slips away out of the long windows. CONSUELLA is motionless in shock. MAY lies across her. They are still, like broken dolls.

64 EXT. WOODS EVENING

2030 blunders through thick woods, angrily pushing brambles and branches aside. He staggers into a clearing and finds himself face to face with Arthur's cottage. He is startled for a moment then goes to the door and enters.

65 INT. ARTHUR'S COTTAGE EVENING

He looks around as though trying to find some answer in the cosy clutter of practical objects. The cottage has been cleaned up. It looks orderly and lived in.

He searches feverishly through the cottage again, rummaging amongst the seeds.

2030
Where's the answer? It's here, somewhere.

65 Continued

He hears a slight noise and whips around, crouching defensively. AVALOW is standing in the conservatory that lets out from the living room.

She is tending plants. The conservatory is now luxurious with growth, mostly herbs. She is hardly identifiable in the shadowy twilight.

AVALOW
(softly)
Don't be afraid.

2030 is tense, in turmoil. She picks a leaf and hands it to him.

AVALOW
Eat it. It will calm you.

He does so. As before her voice has a calming influence on him. Between her and the herb, he relaxes.

AVALOW
I'm trying to go on with Arthur's work.

She continues weeding and pruning amongst the flowers and plants. 2030 steps a little closer looking at her quizzically, trying to decipher her cryptic comment.

2030
(subtly)
What was that?

AVALOW
He was developing strains of plants that would be resistant to the poisoned soils in the Outlands.

2030
(tentatively)
They told me he was . . .

AVALOW
Zardoz? So he was. He invented the very idea.

2030
He did?

65 Continued

AVALOW
He loved jokes, tricks -
He almost became a Renegade. Being Zardoz, going out into the Outlands, saved him. Like many other temperaments, Vortex life was difficult for him. He took nothing seriously. Everything was a game.

2030
(rueful)
He told us Vortex was heaven.

AVALOW
That's his sense of humour. You will like him.

2030
(shaken)
But he's dead, they say.

AVALOW
Well, if he is, he'll soon be restored.

The thought of this is disturbing to 2030.

Eternal life would have little meaning if an accident could end it.

He is trying to decide how far he should trust her.

2030
There are things I want to tell you ... ask you.

She looks into him. Her eyes widen with something like awe or fear.

AVALOW
I see now why you are here.

2030 looks at her with perplexed eyes.

You will surely fail, but I will help you.

She puts her hands on his shoulders and her face close to his. She has such a purity, such a tranquility that he closes his eyes and a great weariness shows in his face.

65 Continued

AVALOW
(in a soft whisper)
You are a killer and I choose you to kill me.

She brushes his cheek with a tender kiss.

2030
What is the purpose of this place?

AVALOW
We made an oasis against anger and the poisoned soil, for man was a plague upon the Earth, choking in his own fumes, but the fuel by which he lived and died was slowly used up.

66 A swirling impression of marching people massed together, armies, commuters, football crowds, seen through hazy yellow smoke. The movements of the people are progressively slowed down until they come to a stop. Finally a sea of immobile faces.

67 EXT. PERIPHERY DAY

The invisible wall separating the Vortex from the outside world. It is marked only by the narrow strip of ploughed soil, but inside there are trees and flowers and outside only arid waste-land.

Inside the Vortex people tend the soil and couples stroll hand in hand, only a few feet away from an angry ragged mob on the Outside.

Some of the mob throw themselves at the invisible barrier but merely bounce off, sometimes hurt or even unconscious. Others hurl stones and insults at those inside. Some, particularly the lame, the women and the children, pray and weep, trying to attract the pity of those inside.

AVALOW (V.O.)
We few, the rich, the powerful, the clever, cut ourselves off to guard the knowledge and treasures of civilisation as the world plunged into a dark age. To do this we had to harden our hearts against the suffering outside.

67 Continued

The couples in the Vortex and the gardeners occasionally glance out at the mob with sorrowful, resigned or even distasteful looks before resuming their work or absorption in each other.

68 INT. COTTAGE DAY

AVALOW continues, eyes closed.

AVALOW
We are custodians of the past for the unknown future.

69 EXT. THE VORTEX DAY

Moving smoothly through the trees and shadows, gardens and buildings. The members of the commune stand and sit in postures of meditation, still and statuesque. The lack of animation gives their beauty and youthfulness a deadness.

AVALOW (V.O.)
To find a way forward for mankind we chose tranquility and meditation and the quiet acquisition of knowledge. With time we were sure we would solve all the problems of man. We penetrated other levels of consciousness in our yearning for Oneness and the final release into perfect Harmony with Nature, Nirvana. For this is the only release from the flesh.

70 EXT. SEASONS MONTAGE

Rain and wind, sun and snow sweep over the landscape of the Commune, leaves bud and fall, the sun rises and sets, trees are winter-bare, then rich with leaf, then stripped again. And the faces of Eternals, lashed with rain, windblown, frosty-breathed, sunkissed.

AVALOW (V.O.)
We who are out of time, live by the rhythm of the earth, by the seasons, by the rise and fall of the sun. We found that if we lose touch with the soil we lose our sanity. And as the

70 Continued

AVALOW (V.O. Cont)
years tumble down like apples from a tree we have learnt many things, but much is still hidden from us. Most of us have never got beyond the Second Level and very few of us to the Fifth or Sixth. I, who approach Nirvana, the Seventh, ask if our way is the only way.

71 EXT. OAK TREE DAY

A perfect 100 year old oak tree stands against the sky. The CAMERA SLOWLY approaches it.

AVALOW'S VOICE
Nature shows us a series of beautiful baffling clues, and the mystery remains. We face a dead end.

The CAMERA MOVES through the limbs of the oak tree. Spiralling inside it, exploring its branches and leaves.

AVALOW'S VOICE
The Fourth Level, the Fifth Level, and the Sixth Level have taken us deep into the hidden soul of the world, to see inside things ...

The CAMERA CLOSES in on a particular branch, towards a fan of leaves and a cluster of acorns. It pushes in further still until one acorn fills the frame.

AVALOW'S VOICE
... Enter the seed, see the plan ...

CAMERA penetrates the acorn into the molecular structure of the seed. A moving, revolving universe. And coming towards us from the far-distance is AVALOW herself, floating through the perfect, ever-changing geometry.

AVALOW'S VOICE
... feel the rhythms of the inner life - but more than that. For we also see a vision of what it will be, with all the infinite variables ...

71 Continued

Superimposed on this molecular structure is a polarised oak tree in different stages of growth that emerges out of the abstract shapes. It comes and goes very rapidly, leaving a kind of shadow, which itself melts into the motion of particles.

AVALOW'S VOICE
... For we are like seeds ourselves. As the acorn contains the plan of the finished oak, so we contain all knowledge inside ourselves, and yet we cannot understand what we are ...

AVALOW comes closer to camera and the inner structure of the seed recedes and fades until she is alone in limbo. She looks at us and speaks.

AVALOW
... but we are only partly conscious. I have penetrated the seeds and looked the answers in the face, yet I could not comprehend them. We have come so close to the mystery, only to find our minds are wanting ...

She stands, frail and beautiful, as the dark plain void slowly lightens.

AVALOW
We touch the truth, but it burns us, it is a dazzling white light that consumes us as we touch it. And that is Nirvana.

The background and AVALOW herself progressively brighten. The colour drains away, burnt away by a blinding whiteness until she is just an outline. A faint shadow on a plane of pure whiteness.

72 INT. COTTAGE DAY

2030 covers his eyes with his hands against the burning light. There is a sound of voices coming from outside. He looks up. The burning radiance has gone. AVALOW lies on a couch sleeping or unconscious.

He moves to a window. There are figures amongst the trees. He goes to another window: more people armed with clubs and staffs. He pushes furniture against the door and crawls on all-fours into the plastic greenhouse dome.

72 Continued

Someone tries the door. There are shouts. He looks out through the plants. There are people all around the cottage. He settles back and waits, crouched and hidden amongst the plants.

The door is being battered down. As it breaks 2030 springs inward, hurling himself at the plastic membrane. It stretches but does not break. He has a knife. He plunges it at the plastic but cannot pierce it.

They rush forward from the outside beating on the dome, aiming at him through the transparent skin.

The dome collapses, enfolding him. The members of the commune attack with increasing violence and excitement. He manages to drag the whole ruin along the ground, thrashing and struggling. The clubs beat down on him. He is wound tight in the plastic like a foetus. It presses on his face, distorting his features.

He kicks out and rolls clear of them for a moment. He is suffocating inside the plastic.

CONSUELLA is screaming encouragement to the others.

Suddenly his fist bursts through the plastic. His attackers are shocked into a momentary pause. He tears a larger hole and climbs through.

CONSUELLA
It can't be done. The plastic is indestructible.

They attack him with evergrowing hysteria. He fights them off. He dodges and runs into the woods. They follow but he soon outpaces them.

73 EXT. THE PERIPHERY DAY

2030 comes running out of the woods into the long scarred clearing of the Periphery. Beyond the barrier, silent and orderly the BRUTALS have gathered. They stand staring in at the Vortex. 2030 raises his arm as though aiming a gun into the sky. The BRUTALS return the salute.

ETERNALS on horseback appear in the distance and shouts and cries are heard. 2030 melts back into the woods and runs on through the thickets.

74 EXT. VALLEY OF APATHETICS DAY

2030 runs through the street. There are sounds of pursuit, horsemen glimpsed behind him. As he turns a bend, there are shouts ahead. He stops, chest heaving. Dull faces watch him from dark windows.

75 INT. CHAPEL DAY

He darts into the Chapel and sinks into a pew, gasping for breath. There are several Apathetics lounging about including the girl he tried to make love to earlier. She is standing at the window. They watch him without interest. There are shouts, gun shots, the sound of horses from outside. 2030 straightens up, listening.

GIRL
(very slow, lazy delivery)
They ... think ... you ... over ... there ...

He goes across and looks out. The pursuers are setting fire to a cottage. They surround it. Some are armed and fire shots through the windows. Apathetics gather round watching. They are noticeably interested. One or two even throw a desultory stone.

The girl watches 2030. There is a glimmer of life in her. She slowly lifts her hand and touches it to the sweat on his neck. She puts her wet finger tips to her mouth and tastes his sweat on her tongue. A tremor passes through her body.

The other Apathetics in the Chapel are getting to their feet, encircling him. They are stirring into action. They begin to make sounds, cries. 2030 is alarmed. The girl takes his hand and leads him to the altar. She holds him and begins to dance.

The Apathetics start to clap, and a chant emerges from the cries. 2030 stumbles at first, but soon catches on. They dance through the chapel. The Apathetics gather energy from him, staring, grinning into his face. He looks at them, beginning to realize something strange is happening. He seems faint, weakened.

GIRL
We're ... taking ... life ... from ... you ...

He is afraid. He tries to avoid their eyes but there are eyes all about him. They dance on to the rhythmic chant.

GIRL
We ... suck ... you ... dry ...

75 Continued

He gets weaker as the energy drains from him and gathers in them. He breaks away from the girl, staggering to the door. They pursue him through the door, baying at his heels.

76 EXT. VILLAGE OF THE APATHETICS DAY

He is seen immediately by the horsemen. The Apathetics surround him. The members of the Commune, some on horse, some on foot, turn on him. But the Apathetics block their way. A horse tramples an Apathetic. A scuffle breaks out between the two groups. In the confusion 2030 slips away, dragging his exhausted limbs.

77 EXT. GROUNDS OF CASTLE HOTEL NIGHT

2030, half-walking, half-crawling approaches the lighted windows of the house. There are sounds of revelling. In the distance several fires are burning. Half a dozen Renegades spill out from the house, cackling and cavorting. One old man is in an ancient white wedding dress, others wear masks, cloaks, animal heads. There is an air of hastily assembled carnival.

They spot 2030's swaying form and descend on him like vultures with cracked and wheezing cries of triumph. He turns feebly for the cover of shrubbery at the side of the drive, but they are quickly upon him and he sinks to the ground.

OLD WOMAN
It's him! It's him!

OLD MAN IN WEDDING DRESS
None of them could catch him -
But he falls into the hands of the poor
old Renegades.

They grip him from all sides, wizened faces and grotesque masks staring down on him.

2030
(weakly)
Death! I can bring you death. Find Friend.
Take me to Friend.

OLD WOMAN
What's he say?

OLD MAN
Shut up!

General bickering breaks out.

78 EXT. WOODS DAY

2030 wears the bridal gown of yellowing white lace, a veil covers his face. He sways on the arm of an old man who is dressed as Death. The other Renegade revellers follow on in a parody of a wedding procession. The three ancient musicians, seen earlier, have joined them and play a fruity march on saxophone, drum and cornet.

As they progress groups of excited Eternals hurry past, armed with flares, cudgels and sometimes guns. Brilliant flares light the sky. There is great excitement and much shouting. DEATH nudges 2030 coyly.

DEATH
Look at all the excitement you've caused, you naughty girl -

In the trees a couple make passionate love together. The old people are delighted with this discovery. They dance around the pair, cat-calling and the musicians break into "By the Light of the Silvery Moon". The couple wave and laugh happily.

GIRL
It's a miracle. We're Apathetics.

OLD MAN
Tell us how. Please. We want some too.

Bawdy laughter.

MALE APATHETIC
We started chasing the Brutal. We got excited. We saw someone. We thought it was him.

GIRL
It wasn't but we killed him anyway.

MALE APATHETIC
Then we felt desire.

2030 walks on something soft. A body is half-buried at his feet.

OLD MAN
(to the couple)
Go to it!

The OLD PEOPLE resume their music and dance in a circle around the couple.

79 EXT. GROUNDS OF GEORGIAN HOUSE NIGHT

It has begun to rain. The bedraggled wedding group threads a way up towards the house where there is much activity. Lights burn, people run to and fro with torches. CONSUELLA is on horseback addressing a group of men. She is a stunning sight, martial, proud, beautiful - aroused by this crisis.

CONSUELLA
Your task is to secure all arms and weapons. Also food supplies. Work house to house. East to West down the valley. If you find the Brutal destroy immediately.

She turns her horse and gallops off. The men troop off, all except one who turns back towards the house. The wedding group block his way.

DEATH
Friend! Friend!

FRIEND gives them a cynical, despairing smile.

DEATH
Kiss the bride, dear Friend. Kiss the bride.

They push and nudge him towards the veiled bridal figure. He lifts the veil and stares into the hard eyes of 2030. He lets out a harsh laugh. He turns to the old people.

FRIEND
You did well. I will take the bride. Death comes closer for us all. Find May. Tell her: Dinosaur.

He leads 2030 off. The old people wheel about and march off in procession, singing, "We Shall Overcome".

80 INT. MUSEUM NIGHT

MAY hurries through the serried ranks of mournful statuary, past a long row of models in military uniforms of the ages. She comes into the Pre-historic section and stops amid the Dinosaurs, Brontosaurus and other reconstructed creatures. She waits a moment and FRIEND and 2030 step into view. 2030 has divested the wedding dress and seems refreshed.

80 Continued

MAY
Time is against us.

FRIEND
The whole Vortex is in a state of Frenzy.

2030
They smell blood. It's a heady perfume.

FRIEND
(laughs)
Consuella is defending our peace and tranquility!

MAY paces amongst the primeval beasts.

MAY
We'll make a plan, since we have common aims. Friend seeks Death, but he wants it like a dramatic climax to a play. 2030 wants the destruction of Vortex life, but he covets its knowledge first.

FRIEND
And what do you want, May, exactly?

MAY
I want mutant births, better brains to seek the answers that have eluded us.

2030
She wants the total power of the one who penetrates the mysteries.

MAY is startled by his insight for a moment. She speaks quietly, her voice controlled, keeping out any revealing emotion.

MAY
We will hide him here and try to find the key to breaking the power of the Tabernacle.

FRIEND
But how?

MAY
I cannot do it.

80 Continued

FRIEND
(hopeless)
Then who can?

MAY
2030. Perhaps ... He has a higher intelligence. In the few days we have ...

She cannot conceal her excitement but does not want to reveal it to the others.

FRIEND
Out with it.

MAY
If we could force-train 2030, teach him, arm him with enough knowledge ...

FRIEND sees the plan.

FRIEND
He might break past the Tabernacle?

2030 watches with narrowed eyes.

MAY
There's a chance.

2030
Let's begin.

MAY
Right. I'll give you pictures too - flashes - you may see clues I miss.

2030
First tell me how the Immortality system works.

MAY
There is a transmitter, a crystal, implanted in the brain of each Eternal.

Flash of MAY's face: She is lying on an operating table, clamps on her head, an incision in her temple. She is conscious. A tiny crystal is being inserted into her brain.

80 Continued

MAY
It sends the total experience - both internal and external - to the Tabernacle. Each person has a duplicate memory stored in the Tabernacle together with their genetic code. If transmission from any individual ceases re-building begins.

2030
The Tabernacle. Where is it?

MAY
That's it. No one knows.

Interior of Tabernacle. Several flashes of bodies rebuilding in membranes.

2030
Destroy the re-building centre.

FRIEND
We've thought of that, idiot. But re-building simply switches to another Vortex.

MAY
And there are secret reserve rebuilding centres - underground, atomic proof - from which there is exit but no entry.

FRIEND's eyes look distant, glassy. He speaks as though from Second Level.

FRIEND
I died once.

FLASH of him hanging by the neck from a rope.

FRIEND (V.O.)
Something is lost. Something is never recovered.

FLASH of his face in liquid inside a re-building membrane.

80 Continued

2030
Why do you have no choice in this, as you do in all other matters? Why can't you vote for death?

MAY
The aim of the Founders was to make the Vortexes vulnerable. It was not a selfish scheme. It was to preserve science - civilisation - against the oncoming tide of anarchy and ignorance. They forsaw the possibility of self-destruction. They arranged for the Tabernacle to erase from their memories its whereabouts.

2030
Where are the Founders now?

FRIEND
You've met them.

**FLASH** of the Renegades dancing in their faded evening clothes.

FRIEND (V.O.)
They were middle-aged scientists. The best in the world. They were too conditioned to mortality to adjust. They went Renegade.

FRIEND
We were mostly their children, born into Vortex life. A few of their young students survived, May amongst them.

**FRIEND** sinks into his melancholy mood.

2030
What about the wall?

MAY
Straight Mathematics - the dynamics of gravity.

2030
What is gravity?

**FRIEND** turns to MAY with a despairing gesture.

80 Continued

FRIEND
Hopeless. His ignorance is monumental. All we have is a few days at the most.

MAY
We'll try. There are some other women who share my views. You will inseminate them. We and they will teach you everything we can. Then when you're ready, you will do battle with the Tabernacle - break it or be broken.

Pterodactyls fly through a rain forest. MAY stands behind the projection.
There is an air of solemn fatality about MAY's speech. They are silent, but it is a silence of tacit agreement.

81 INT. MUSEUM LECTURE ROOM DAY

2030 watches a wall filled with rapidly changing projections - formulae, gene-patterns, etc. MAY stands beside it, interpreting with a rapid word here, an explanation there -

MAY
Calculate ... Now apply to the Protein link ... the K-factor ... there's the genetic structure ...

His face is utterly concentrated. His eyes are burning, absorbing everything.
Through a pattern of moving molecular shapes a glimpse of a younger, carefree May walking hand in hand with a young man, both laughing.

2030 (V.O.)
I see you, May, your past.

It is gone again. The ever-changing molecular structure engulfs it, and MAY's instructive voice is drowned out in a complex rhythm of African drums swelling with chanting voices.

Flash of MAY's face buried under 2030's head and shoulder, sex-entwined. Her face is expressionless, her eyes cold, old. The music becomes confused. Indian rhythms fight the African,sitars drown the African drums, take over.

82 INT. MUSEUM-MUSIC ROOM DAY

Musical instruments of all kinds pattern the walls. A violin, an oboe, a saxophone, stand on plinths across the floor area. 2030 sits cross-legged watching a projection of a musical manuscript. The sitar gives way to Bach, played on an organ. A point of light dances over the notes on the projection.

AVALOW stands by the projection. She wears a large diamond in the centre of her forehead, like a third eye.

AVALOW
Through music you will touch the hidden spirit, the race consciousness. It will point the way to the second, third and fourth levels. For all music is a yearning for Oneness - with another - with many - with the world - with God.

LATER

The Bach changes into Vortex music. AVALOW chants it. It is haunting, ethereal, beautiful. 2030 and AVALOW dance, moving slowly, sinuously to the music. His eyes are drawn to the diamond 'eye'. He looks into its glacial depths. The music, her beauty, the diamond conspire to hypnotise him. He reaches out his hand like a sleep-walker. He touches the diamond with finger and thumb.

AVALOW has disappeared, or perhaps it's later. He holds the diamond between finger and thumb just as before, in an identical posture, staring at it.

The music continues, but AVALOW's voice comes out of it.

AVALOW (V.O.)
You will learn to see the lines running into the future, you will make insight-jumps and know moments that will happen. When you can see Truth in the deeps of the diamond, only then can you dare to know the communicator. This gem is passed to each Nirvana aspirant. It is truly precious.

A closer view of the diamond. 2030 inversely reflected in the many facets.

83 INT. MUSEUM FRIEND'S QUARTERS NIGHT

FRIEND holds a pack of picture postcards in his hand. They are reproductions of paintings. 2030 is eating at a table. FRIEND paces up and down before him in a consciously theatrical manner.

FRIEND
Now for the history of Western Art in thirty seconds flat.

He peels off the top card and slaps it down on the table in front of 2030. It is the famous primeval hand marks from the cave drawings.

He talks rapidly.

FRIEND
It all started with some fellow sitting in a cave, putting mud on his hands and slapping on a wall. Then he gets hold of a pebble, changes it a bit and you've got the Wilendorf Venus.

He flicks off the card reproducing the Wilendorf Venus.

FRIEND
They went on for ages copying this and copying the copies.

He deals out five or six more cards showing the way sculpture developed from the Wilendorf Venus. The next card is a Giotto.

FRIEND
Giotto doing adverts for a popular deity called Christ made things look solid - big breakthrough. Then the big three - Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael -

He puts down examples of their work. CLOSE SHOTS of all these as 2030 examines them.

FRIEND
Then a Dutchman invented oils. Up to then it had been plaster and paint on walls. And - bang - Vermeer and his pals.

Cards showing Vermeer and his school.

83 Continued

FRIEND
Then the sexy south got hold of this oil painting idea and here comes Rubens turning out dirty pictures for the rich.

Two cards of voluptuous, scantily clad Ruben's ladies.

FRIEND
Then Velasquez - incredible.

Three quick glimpses of Velasquez.

FRIEND
Pause for the French Revolution then - wham - Turner, an Englishman.

Turner, 'Rain, steam, speed".

FRIEND
Picked up by the French and hey presto, Impressionism.

Several Impressionist pictures quickly showing its development.

FRIEND
Do you see the connections?

2030
I'm learning more about you than Western Art.

FRIEND
(wry)
With your amazing mind you can work out the links for yourself.

Saying thus, he gathers up the cards into a pack and holding them in front of 2030's nose, flicks through them. CLOSE on this as a Kaleidoscopic history of the art flashes past with the weird kind of animation of the old "flicker" cards.

84 INT. MUSEUM NIGHT

2030 lies on a couch in a feverish sleep. The large diamond is clutched in his hand. MAY watches him as FRIEND approaches with a very pale, slender girl, STAR. 2030 stirs and mumbles in his sleep.

84 Continued

2030
Fire! Fire!

MAY
(in a low voice)
He's burning out - but we cannot stop now.

FRIEND
He'll be a hard shell of knowledge with the human centre dried out - hollow, like you, May.

MAY makes a sign to STAR who comes forward and bends over 2030.

FRIEND
You'll kill him. Give him time.

MAY
We have no time to give.

STAR touches her cool fingers to his forehead. He recoils, his body caught in a series of convulsions.

2030
I'm falling! Zardoz help me - I'm falling into black . . . the void. . . .

85 PROCESS NIGHT SKY

2030 is falling through black space, turning and twisting, faster and faster. His mouth is open in a soundless scream.

STAR (V.O.)
Don't fall afraid. I'm here. Come to me.

He looks down. Far below him and to his right, STAR drifts in space.

STAR
Come to me. Come.

He struggles towards her, awkwardly 'swimming' in her direction. She comes closer. He is afraid he will pass her and fall on, into the abyss. He reaches out, straining to clasp her outstretched hand. He

85 Continued

is almost past her. Then their fingers touch. He holds on. He draws himself to her. They entwine their bodies. They turn, slowly now, revolving in a free-fall through a universe of stars, planets, galaxies.

STAR
My body is the medium to my mind. There I will give you all that is known of astrophysics and you will also feel something of the ecstasy of our inner world.

They drift far away into the nether deeps of space until they are lost and gone.

86 INT. MUSEUM NIGHT

2030 is alone sleeping deeply on his couch. Suddenly a man's voice calls.

VOICE
I have come for you.

2030 leaps to his feet, instantly and totally awake. He slides into the shadows and moves stealthily towards the voice. He raises his right hand. There is a gun in it.

VOICE
Over here.

It comes from the area devoted to costumes. He goes towards it, passing down the rows of models, their blank faces staring at him. He comes up to a model with a top hat and black velvet cloak. As he passes it the model reaches out an arm and touches him with a white-gloved hand. He spins on it. The face is as dead as the others, but stern and terrifying in aspect. It speaks.

VOICE
We've met before, I believe.

2030 seizes the face, rips off a rubber mask. It tears like skin. The face underneath is smiling, round, with a small beard.

2030
Arthur Frayn!

86 Continued

ARTHUR
Come now. My Brutal friends call me Zardoz.

The smile fades. The eyes are piercing, full of a satanic power. His other hand comes up. There is the flash of a knife blade. He plunges it into 2030's stomach.

ARTHUR
Revenge.

2030 seizes the dagger's hilt. ARTHUR FRAYN is gone, slipping into the shadows. 2030 pulls out the knife. The blade springs back out from the hilt with a tinny twang. A stage knife.

ARTHUR reappears in the shadows at the end of a row of models. The white gloves and pale luminous face seemingly suspended in space.

ARTHUR
Now we're even.

ARTHUR snaps his fingers in the air and a luminous glass sphere the size of a tennis ball appears in his hand. He throws it from hand to hand.

ARTHUR
(reciting, his voice rising in power until it booms like Zardoz)
"Has it been worthwhile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball,
To roll it towards some overwhelming question,
To say: I am Lazarus, come from the dead . . ."

2030's face trembles, the old terror of Zardoz betrays itself. Suddenly ARTHUR throws the ball of light across to 2030 who catches it. It lights up his face.

ARTHUR
(normal voice)
Do you know the next line? It's T.S. Eliot.

86 Continued

2030 hesitates. Then he recites haltingly.

2030
"I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all."

ARTHUR
Well done. Well done. You've learnt your lessons well.

2030
What will you tell me?

ARTHUR laughs, a roaring, terrifying laugh, like the sea.

ARTHUR
What do you see in the ball?

2030 looks into it.

2030
Nothing.

ARTHUR
Nothing? Then I have nothing to tell you.
But I will show you tricks. Conjuring tricks.

He pulls a long skein of coloured silk handkerchiefs from his sleeve, laughing his mad laughter. 2030 smiles, then he too begins to laugh. They join together in their laughter.

ARTHUR
Good. You see the joke. You must see the joke. Good.

MAY and her women emerge from all sides in their flowing dresses. They glide in, surrounding ARTHUR like petals of a flower. As he is led away he calls back to 2030.

ARTHUR
Remember how the poem ends.
"We have lingered in the chambers of the sea,
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown,
Till human voices wake us and we drown!"

And the girls seem like sea-girls for a moment. MAY goes to 2030, startling him with her 'human' voice.

86 Continued

MAY
We call it the Death Madness. It will pass. He is only just re-built.

2030
They'll come for me here tonight.

MAY
How can you know that?

2030
Mind-lines point that way.

MAY studies his face, its remoteness, the burning hollow eyes.

MAY
Then our time is up.

2030
Or come.

MAY
You are far on.

2030
Give me a Communicator. I will talk to the Tabernacle.

MAY
We must hide you somewhere. They will come for you here.

2030
They will come but not find me. Leave me here alone.

There is an absolute authority in his voice and a coldness silences her doubts. He stands quite still, not looking at her. She leaves her Communicator next to him on a table, almost says something then turns abruptly and leaves.

87 INT. MUSEUM FRIEND'S QUARTERS NIGHT

2030 sits alone in an upright chair before a small card table covered in green baize. On the table are the luminous glass globe, the diamond, May's communicator and his gun. In an arc about him are

87 Continued

a series of standing mirrors, each reflecting his image. He is in deep meditation.

Suddenly all the mirrors are filled with the figure of a veiled woman. She has come up behind him and he watches her many reflections. His hand slides towards the gun. She moves closer until she is barely three feet behind his chair.

2030
Why are you come?

She lifts her veil. It is CONSUELLA. He betrays no surprise.

CONSUELLA
I come, as the others, to give you my memory, my knowledge, my understanding ... and to take new life from you.

2030
You came to take my life.

In a flashing movement she draws a knife from her robe and holds it over him. His hand simultaneously clasps the gun, but otherwise he does not move. He locks her eyes with his in the mirror.

2030
In hunting me you have discovered your true nature.

CONSUELLA
I have ached for this moment.

2030
But the hunt is always better than the kill.

He puts down his gun. She trembles on the point of striking, then slowly her hand falls to her side. She stands limply, waiting.

CONSUELLA
(softly)
In hunting you in my hate, I came to know you. I became you, the hunter, the killer. I have destroyed 'Vortex life. It's funny. You did nothing.

87 Continued

2030
The invisible worm that flies in the night.

CONSUELLA
Of all the women who have come to you, none have my passion. They drained you, but I would fill you with life and love.

2030
You have given me what no other gave. If I live, we will live together. Go now.

She stands drained from her overwhelming feelings. He looks down at the diamond, shutting her out. There are other voices, shouting. CONSUELLA turns away towards them.

CONSUELLA
The Brutal is not here. I was mistaken.

2030 picks up the diamond and brings it close to his eye, then on impulse he holds it behind the glass globe which magnifies it enormously. Very close on this to reveal movements inside the gem, flowing veins, streaks like lightning, cells in motion. Revelation on his face. He mumbles to himself.

2030
Refraction of light ...
Infinite ...

He presses a switch on the Communicator. The lens lights up.

2030
Tabernacle, do you know me?

TABERNACLE VOICE
I have your voice print, 2030, and your genetic code, but only memory fragments.

2030
The crystal transmitter. How does it work?

TABERNACLE VOICE
I cannot give information which may threaten the security of the Tabernacle system.

87 Continued

2030
Let me tell you then - Brain emissions refract low-wavelength laser light passing through the crystal in the brain. These oscillations are a code sent to you for interpretation and storage. Yes or no?

TABERNACLE VOICE
Not permitted.

2030
Now where are you? What are you?

TABERNACLE VOICE
Not permitted.

2030
All right. I'll tell you. A receiver is usually much like a transmitter. I think you are just a crystal - a large one. In fact, this one. This diamond.

He holds up the diamond to the lens of the communicator.

2030
In here is infinite storage space for refracted light patterns - As the seed contains all the future possibilities, this diamond holds all the past.

TABERNACLE VOICE
You have me in the palm of your hand, 2030.

2030
I'm sure you have many duplicates.

TABERNACLE VOICE
Let me save time for you - already you can see my light-wavelengths in the diamond. Soon you will find out how to erase the refractions and destroy me. Your aim is to destroy me, isn't it?

2030
Yes.

87 Continued

TABERNACLE VOICE
Would you kill God?

2030 laughs at this.

2030
Such vanity.

TABERNACLE VOICE
I am the sum of all these people and all their knowledge. I am All-seeing, I am everywhere and nowhere. That has often served people as a definition of God. Would you destroy that? If you let me live you may come inside me and I will show you many mysteries.

2030 smiles wryly.

2030
(ironically)
Would you be tempting me?

TABERNACLE VOICE
You have looked into me. How can you resist entering me?

2030
And risk destruction? Why ever not?

A beam shines out from the diamond and projects a hologramme of itself. 2030 steps into the centre of the hologramme, the facets enclosing him.

88 INT. DIAMOND HOLOGRAMME

It is like the inside of the acorn cell seen earlier, but more colourful. 2030 cannot find bearings in the shifting, whirling patterns around him.

TABERNACLE VOICE
You see me in the fourth dimension.
Come to the centre.

88 Continued

He struggles on. Lines, veins, facets lead towards a central point. He approaches it. Soon a black spot is visible at the confluence of many lines. 2030 gropes towards it. A powerful, high-pitched humming noise assails his ears. It is painful. He reaches the centre. It is a black hole. He kneels by it.

TABERNACLE VOICE
Look inside it, if you wish to know.

He summons his courage and looks down into the blackness. His eyes widen with a kind of horrifying amazement.

89 INT. MUSEUM DAY

The commune hunters, wild and wanton, search through the museum wreaking destruction in their wake. They are like drunken soldiers sacking a city. They shout and laugh as they ruin the long protected treasures.

A LEADER
He's here somewhere! Search everything!

A VOICE
Smoke him out!

A fire starts, smoke billows up.

90 INT. MUSEUM FRIEND'S QUARTERS DAY

FRIEND, MAY and some of her women hurry over to 2030 who sits at the green table slumped over the glass globe, the diamond in his open palm. The voices and violence get closer. The fires crackle. MAY and FRIEND lift 2030 to his feet. He wakes and looks at them.

MAY
They're here.

FRIEND
Try the East door.

They move off, away from the oncoming attackers. But there are others advancing from the East door. They are trapped. They are seen. The aggressors come towards them, weapons brandished.

90 Continued

FRIEND
You're finished.

2030 holds up the diamond between finger and thumb sighting it towards the aggressors.

2030
Stay close to me; inside my aura.

2030 concentrates along the line of the diamond. The ring of attackers slow to a stop, their movements strangely slurred and slowed. Then they begin to retreat, but with unnatural movements.

MAY
(in a hushed voice)
He's reversing time.

2030 moves forward as the mob reverses. The smashed pictures are whole again, the costume models come to their feet. The attackers are running backwards. 2030 and his companions follow them out through the door.

Suddenly time jumps back to the present and the mob converges on the empty space formerly occupied by 2030 and his friends. They drive forward flailing their weapons then stop short in astonishment. They begin to look foolishly under tables.

91 EXT. MUSEUM DAY

2030 stands quite still, head bowed, his face strained and exhausted. The others buzz with excitement and chatter, but give him space out of a kind of awe.

MAY
Of course it's been done, but only in personal time, never imposed on a group, and only then for a second or two.

FRIEND approaches him tentatively, aware of his 'strangeness'.

FRIEND
Can you tell us how things stand? What now?

2030 looks at him oddly. Then he seems to hear a voice. He looks off.

91 Continued

2030
An old man calls me. The voice of the turtle is heard in the land.

92 INT. CASTLE HOTEL DORMITORY DAY

2030 stands at the bedside of the old scientist. His leathery face makes him look like a turtle so there is a punning connection with 2030's remark.

OLD MAN
(weakly)
I remember how how it was.

2030 holds the diamond before him. The old man's rheumy eyes fix on it and he nods in recognition.

OLD MAN
It was for space travel ...
All those tricks ...
Of course, didn't work, space ... Another dead end.

He wheezes a kind of laugh, then his throat rattles. After a moment 2030 closes his eyes and crosses his hands. He is impressively calm in the presence of death.

2030
A good death.

MAY, FRIEND and the others stand at the foot of the bed. Gasps escape them as the old man dies. FRIEND leaps in the air with a whooping cry.

FRIEND
You did it!

93 EXT. STABLES OF GEORGIAN HOUSE DAY

MAY and her women are mounting horses. They wear coloured cloaks. Provisions are packed in saddlebags. 2030 looks up at MAY on her horse.

93 Continued

2030
Ride East. You will pass through the wall. Take this with you.
(he passes the diamond to her)
All Vortex life is there. Let your sons and daughters look into it. They'll know how. It's all you'll need.

MAY tries to find something to say. A powerful emotion seems about to break through her coldness.

MAY
What will become of you? Will you go back to your people?

2030 shakes his head. They share a moment of mutual sadness.

2030
I've come too far. There's no going back for me.

He turns and strides off. MAY watches him go, holding the diamond. Then she leads off and the others follow.

94 EXT. WATERFALL DAY

AVALOW stands on a rock by the waterfall, perfectly still. 2030 is a little way off with FRIEND. CONSUELLA approaches with her armed band. They bristle as they see him.

FRIEND
You're too late, Consuella. It's all over. The Renegades are dying like flies.

CONSUELLA is magnificent, commanding. She comes up face to face with 2030. Her angry band make to attack 2030. CONSUELLA raises her hand to check them.

CONSUELLA
He's not to blame. We destroyed ourselves from within.

People are gathering from all sides, members of the commune, Renegades, Apathetics, ARTHUR FRAYN appears in his magicians cloak, standing on a rock.

94 Continued

ARTHUR
That's truer than you know, Consuella. And here I would like to claim some credit.

They turn their attention to him in surprise.

ARTHUR
You see, our death-wish was devious and deep. As Zardoz, 2030, I was able to choose your forefathers. It was careful genetic breeding that produced this mutant, this slave who could free his masters. And Friend was my accomplice.

He laughs delightedly at his own cleverness and enjoys his effect on the others.

ARTHUR
Don't you remember the man in the library, 2030?

FLASH of the library scene, seeing that the man who beckoned 2030, was indeed Arthur.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
It was I who led you to the Wizard of Oz book.

FLASH of ARTHUR in the courtyard of the castle, smiling secretly as 2030 and his companions sneak in and hide.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
It was I who gave your access to the transporter. It was I.

Again he laughs. But attention shifts away from him to AVALOW. She begins to glow, an aura of light surrounds her.

ARTHUR
(theatrically)
One last trick - Nirvana for Avalow - the lady vanishes!

95 EXT. HILLTOP DAY

MAY and the women ride slowly off in line, picked out on the ridge of a hill.

96 EXT. THE WATERFALL DAY

They are all in Second Level, moving in a strange, slow dance rhythm. At the same time they sing a wordless melody, very simple and joyous. The melody is repeated endlessly, but is saved from monotony by the expressiveness of the voices; it is possible to discern a kind of conversation going on between the participants. They merge into harmonies with each other, then split up and move closer to other dancers, the voices answering each other.

They seem to communicate with their wordless voices, calling through the melody, drawn by the sound of another person, going close to them, touching their bodies together before responding to another call. There is an air of 'oneness' and sublime happiness. 2030 is removed from this, apart.

AVALOW glows on the rock, in a white diaphanous dress, jewels in her hair. Behind her, the waterfall cascades over rocks making a filigree background of spray into which she seems to melt. She is luminescent.

CONSUELLA speaks to 2030 in a soft 'dreamy' voice.

CONSUELLA
Someone must kill her body when the time comes, and she chose you.

He nods his understanding.

2030 and CONSUELLA walk through the euphoric celebrants towards AVALOW. 2030 stops under the rock. He calls her name in a loud voice, at the same time aiming the gun carefully at her heart.

2030
Avalow!

AVALOW focuses him and smiles. Then she sings a single note. It is such a strange unearthly sound and she holds it eternally. It has the effect of arresting all movement. The Eternals come to a stillness and face her. 2030 is moved by it. He lowers the gun. When she stops there is perfect silence and stillness.

96 Continued

AVALOW
Through the Seventh-Level I pass into Nirvana, earning Death. But now we are all mortal again. Now we can say yes to death, but never again No. Yet even as we die, we live on, for everything that we were and knew survives in the Tabernacle to be discovered again, by those who come after us.

2030 raises his gun and aims once more. AVALOW has become translucent, insubstantial. There is a blinding white light around her that gets stronger all the time. She seems part of the spray behind her.

2030 cannot pull the trigger. He begins to tremble. CONSUELLA is by his side.

CONSUELLA
Do it! Do it! You must!

He cannot do it.

2030
All that I was is gone. I'm burnt out.

His gun hand is shaking, his face sweating.

Suddenly a shot rings out. A speck of red blood appears on AVALOW's breast, then she just fades into the air. Nothing is left. She is gone.

2030 looks in astonishment at his unfired gun and at the transubstantiation of AVALOW.

The shot is greeted by a corporate sigh of happiness and the euphoric celebrations begin again. People crowd around 2030. FRIEND is among them.

GIRL
Kill me next, 2030.

ARTHUR
Let's kill each other, Friend. Have proper regard for irony.

The thought becomes epidemic, and they all crowd around, begging for death.

96 Continued

FRIEND grasps ARTHUR's hand. Then he looks around at the scenery drinking in the world for the last time.

FRIEND
The play was lousy, but by God the sets were great.

Then several more shots are fired. The peacocks burst out of the undergrowth, screaming with alarm.

A ring of armed men break out of the cover of the woods. They fire rifles into the crowd. FRIEND is killed. So is ARTHUR.

FRIEND
Success!

People turn joyfully and jubilantly towards their killers. They run towards them smiling, arms flung wide.

As the bullets hit them some manage to stagger up to their assassins to kiss and embrace them, giving thanks.
CONSUELLA clutches hold of 2030.

CONSUELLA
Your friends?

2030
(grimly)
Yes.

They are completely surrounded, but 2030 takes CONSUELLA's arm and pulls her with him. He ducks and weaves, using the others as a shield.

The Eternals make no attempt to save themselves from the bullets. The attackers are so amazed at this reaction that they ease off their shooting.

Moving very fast, 2030 and CONSUELLA break through the ring and escape into the trees.

Behind them the remaining members of the Vortex die in paroxysms of joy.

97 EXT. HILLTOP DAY

MAY riding at the head of the column of horses, stops and looks back at the verdant, beautiful valley of the Vortex below. Distant gun shots drift up on the wind. MAY's eyes brim with tears.

MAY
A woman's tears!

98 EXT. CAVE DAY

2030 and CONSUELLA hurry over rocky ground to a cliff face. They enter a cave.

99 INT. CAVE DAY

Blackness. A scraping sound, tinder sparks fly, then a candle is lit. It illuminates the cave and a rough straw bed. 2030 takes CONSUELLA in his arms and kisses her. They hold each other for a long, still moment.

100 EXT. WATERFALL DAY

The joyful massacre continues. The attackers are frantic now to be rid of these disturbing creatures.

101 INT. CAVE DAY

CONSUELLA and 2030 are on a straw bed. They begin to make love.

102 EXT. WATERFALL DAY

The shooting has stopped. The happy dying faces. In death they sing their characteristic chant, kiss each other and make farewells. The attackers stand silent in a ring around them. One of them, a leader, moves amongst the dying, calling out.

LEADER
2030! 2030! 2030! 2030!

103 INT. CAVE DAY

CONSUELLA's face, wet with perspiration, twisted by extreme pleasure or perhaps pain. Her breath comes in short moans and cries.

A WIDER SHOT reveals that she is giving birth on the straw bed. 2030 is at her side, delivering the child. He turns his head towards her.

2030
(in a murmur)
Boy.

He ties twine around the umbilical cord and cuts it with his knife.

The cave has been furnished somewhat. There is a table and some chairs. Articles hang from the walls.

DISSOLVE

2030 and CONSUELLA are sitting on a natural stone bench, their backs against the wall of the cave. CONSUELLA is suckling the baby. Between them on the wall hangs the gun.

DISSOLVE

They are in precisely the same position but the child is now two years old, and sits between them. It wears a string of gems in its hair.

DISSOLVE

All three in the same position, but the child is now five years old and the parents have aged.

DISSOLVE

Ditto. The boy is a youth. They sit in exactly the same positions. They have aged appreciably. The BOY gets up and starts to walk away. CONSUELLA reaches out a hand to restrain him, but he brushes it away. He leaves without looking back. 2030 and CONSUELLA are left alone.

DISSOLVE

103 Continued

The same, but CONSUELLA and 2030 are much older, in their sixties. They still stare fixedly ahead. Their expressions are enigmatic. CONSUELLA reaches her hand towards 2030, finding his hand, and holding it.

DISSOLVE

They are crumpled and bent and still hand in hand.

DISSOLVE

Two skeletons are in their places.

DISSOLVE

In slow, slow motion the bones and skulls crumple and turn to dust.

DISSOLVE

A blank, damp cave wall. Looking at it closer, reveals the imprints of a hand, a sign of the presence of man, like the earliest cave drawings.

END